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THE PHAEDRUS, LYSIS, AND PROTAGORAS OF PLATO

THE PHAEDRUS, LYSIS, AND PROTAGORAS

OF

PLATO

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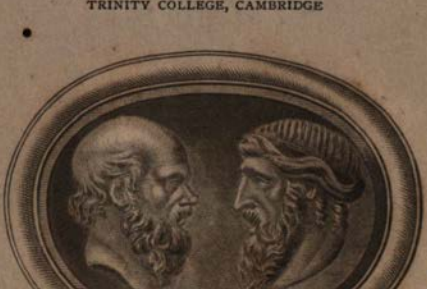
A NEW AND LITERAL TRANSLATION

MAINLY FROM THE TEXT OF BEKKER

By J. WRIGHT, M.A.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE



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PHÆDRUS

SUMMARY OF THE PHÆDRUS

As Socrates was prowling after his manner about the 227
streets of Athens in search of self-knowledge, he met a gay young acquaintance of his, named Phædrus, who told him that he was just come from the Rhetorician Lysias, and was going to refresh himself with a walk outside the walls. Socrates joins him, as he feels sure that Lysias has been regaling Phædrus with one of his speeches, and that Phædrus has got it by heart; and having himself, as he confesses, a weakness for speeches, he would like above all things to hear it. Phædrus is somewhat coy, though evidently longing to disburden himself of his well-conned sentences. Socrates, however, soon discovers that Phædrus has got a copy of the speech itself beneath his cloak; and would naturally rather hear the actual words of the great orator than his young friend's faltering reminiscences. So they turn aside from the public road to look for a pleasant place in which Phædrus may read the speech.

The Ilissus is flowing hard by; and they walk along 229
its shallow bed with their feet in the water towards a lofty plane-tree which they see before them. Here, under the shade of its spreading boughs, they find a delicious slope of grass, on which Socrates luxuriously stretches himself, thoroughly enjoying the summer scents and summer sounds which play around him; while Phædrus draws forth his treasured document and begins to read.

It is but a sorry production, poor in style and low in 231
its moral tone, and surely no fair representation of

Lysias's ordinary speeches. It purports to be addressed to a beautiful youth by a suitor, who owns that he is not in love, but who maintains that on this very account he ought to be preferred to one who is, because lovers are such unreasonable, disagreeable, suspicious, and altogether objectionable beings.

234 When Phædrus has finished the speech, he bursts into raptures over it, asserting that no one in Greece could have written a better. To this Socrates demurs. He has not paid much attention, he says, to the subject-matter, but he does not admire the style and mode of treatment. He finds in it a good deal of tautology, juvenile display, and lack of invention. Indeed, he fancies that he might even make as good a speech himself on the same subject. At this hint of course Phædrus, the speech-lover, catches eagerly. Socrates coquets after his manner, and in imitation of his young friend's previous coyness; but is at last forced to comply.

237 He begins by applying to the subject his familiar dialectic method. To escape the conceit of knowledge without the reality he would define what love really is. But he has not gone far in this somewhat prosaic vein, when he professes to feel within himself a poetic impulse, which he can only attribute to the inspiration of the deity who haunts the spot. He proceeds however with his speech, and paints vividly the horrible results which flow from the companionship of an impassioned lover. But instead of *going* on to show the advantages offered by the suitor who does not love, he feels that in attempting to praise he will be *carried* beyond himself by the ecstatic influence to which he has just referred; and therefore, with a farewell to Phædrus, he brings his speech abruptly to a close, and prepares to return home. Thus ends his First Discourse on Love.

242 But Phædrus will not hear of his going; and Socrates himself is disposed to stay, for he hears his inward monitor forbidding him to depart till he has made atonement. And then he becomes conscious of his sin. In the speech which he has just uttered, by speaking of love as an unholy thing, he has blasphemed Eros, the god

of Love, the son of Aphrodite. And he cannot depart till he has purified himself from his sin. And he will do so before evil come upon him. The poet Stesichorus maligned Helen in his poem, and lost his sight. He composed a palinode, showing her to be innocent as beautiful; and his sight was restored to him. So he too will compose a palinode by way of atonement. He will deliver a panegyric on Love.

Now follows the Second Discourse on Love, put in- 244
deed into the mouth of Socrates, but embodying Plato's own psychological ideas. It is a mythic hymn in honour of Eros, of surpassing beauty as a literary composition, and valuable also for its philosophic merit. Love is a condition of the soul. The nature of the soul is therefore investigated; and the speaker soars aloft beyond the heavenly vault to the bright regions where pure existences dwell. There it is given to the soul to be feasted on pure beauty; and in proportion as it has been fed and nourished by that heavenly pasture is it enabled, during its earthly sojourn, duly to appreciate beautiful objects here. The soul, that has fed richly there, enslaves here that portion of itself wherein vice is contained, and liberates that wherein virtue dwells. So walking hand in hand with the object of its love it leads on earth a bright and blessed life, looking forward to a brighter life beyond, which they two will live together for their love's sake. Thus does Socrates in poetic strain pay to Eros a due recantation for the impiety of his former discourse.

Phædrus of course is enchanted with the speech. He 257
thinks that the one composed by Lysias makes but a poor figure beside it; and even fears that Lysias will be so put out of conceit with his own work, that he will not compose any more, especially as he has been somewhat disparaged of late by public men as a mere speech-writer. But Socrates has no fear of the kind. Public men, he says, only sneer at speeches, because they cannot always make good ones. Whether in proposing bills or enacting laws they make speeches. The only question is, Are the speeches good or bad? And so we come to the point of our whole argument. In what

does a good discourse, whether spoken or written, consist? In other words, What is Rhetoric? Is it an inartistic knack, or a systematic method?

261 Rhetoric, Socrates answers, is the art of winning men's souls by means of words: not merely in public harangue, as is commonly thought, but in talk of all kind, however *familiar*. And its method is, to make things appear like to other things in all cases where such likening is possible; and to drag to the light all such attempts in one's adversary, however dexterously concealed. Now there are some things between which there is such little likeness, that this process is difficult; others again, between which the likeness is so great, that this process is comparatively easy: and this is the proper field of Rhetoric. The accomplished speaker therefore should know thoroughly the real nature of things, if he is to liken them skilfully with other things: that is, he must know the true, and not, as is commonly thought, the semblance of the true.

262 Socrates now proceeds to bring forward the three speeches which have just been delivered as illustrations of his definition of Rhetoric. The speech of Lysias he soon dismisses. It gives no definition of Love. It does not even show whether Love belongs to that class of things between which there is little likeness, and which therefore do not well admit of discussion: or to that class of things, between which the likeness is considerable, on which therefore there may well be difference of opinion and discussion, and in which consequently rhetorical skill is most efficacious, and a definition is especially necessary. He further points out that Lysias's arguments are blurted out without any method; there being no apparent reason why one should come before the other. But in his own two speeches, he submits, there *is* method; and whatever merit they may possess is owing to this. And the method by which one should proceed is twofold, Combination and Division. A speaker, in considering a thing, should take a comprehensive view of all scattered particulars connected with it, and should combine them into a general notion, to be expressed in words by a Definition. This process

he had followed in his first speech by giving a definition of Love. Again, the speaker should divide a general notion into its constituent parts, not cutting it up at random like a bungling carver, but dissecting it at the joints into its particular species. Thus he had taken Madness, and divided it into Divine and Human. The latter he had discussed in his first speech. In his second he had taken Divine Madness, and had further divided it into four subordinate species: of which the Amatory—that is, the Madness or Inspiration proceeding from Eros and Aphrodite—had been the subject of his second speech. And the speaker, he adds, who adopts these two courses is in his opinion a Dialectician.

True, breaks in Phædrus, but not a master of 266
Rhetoric. Yes, rejoins Socrates, this is true Rhetoric. Your professors of Rhetoric teach you a number of tricks —exordium, narration, proof, refutation, appeals, and the like. But these are mere refinements, preliminary accomplishments, of Rhetoric, not Rhetoric itself. To produce vomitings and purgings does not make a physician. The physician must first know the nature of the drug, and the constitution of the patient. Just in the same way then that the physician has to do with the body; with the human body generally, and with the body of his particular patient: so the rhetorician has to do with the mind; with the human mind generally, and with the particular mind of the person or persons whom he is addressing. He must therefore thoroughly know the human mind, both as a whole, and in its varieties. He must know the exact truth of the thing about which he is speaking, that he may be able easily to trace the various shades of its likeness to other things. Then, with this twofold knowledge as his basis, he must apply the thing to the mind by means of words; discerning at once with the rapid tact of practice what likeness of the thing to apply to what variety of mind; and using, if you will, all the subordinate artifices of your professor's lecture-room, wherewith to flavour and adapt his discourse. Thus and thus only will he become a real master of Rhetoric. The process will be long and laborious: but the wise man will bestow the labour

required, not with a view of persuading men, but for the sake of pleasing the gods.

274 So much, continues Socrates, for the scientific and unscientific treatment of a discourse. Of course what I have said may apply in a measure to the written as well as the spoken word. But is the written word really susceptible of scientific treatment? is it capable of producing real and permanent effect? The Egyptian god Thamus, whom the Greeks call Ammon, did not think so. Writing was brought to him for his approval by its complacent inventor. But he thought that it would do harm, rather than good, to the memory; that it would give a show of knowledge without the reality. And I quite agree with him. Writings seem to me like paintings. If you ask them questions, they cannot answer you. If you attack them, they cannot retaliate. They cannot adapt themselves to individual minds. At all times, and to all persons, they present the same cold immovable face. They may give momentary pleasure; they may remind a man of something which he knew before. But they cannot really teach, because they cannot answer questions, and supply what is wanting in the mind of the reader. And, instead of aiding, they weaken the memory, because they tempt it to rely on foreign support. How different from the spoken word, of which the written word is but the phantom or shadow. The spoken word, as we have shown, is possessed both of life and love. It can bear seed, and springing up in other minds produce a noble progeny, ever undecaying, and giving happiness, so far as happiness is possible, to man.

278 Socrates concludes his remarks with a few words in praise of the orator Isocrates, whom he considers to be endowed with a nobler nature than Lysias: and after a prayer to the deities of the spot returns with his young friend to Athens.

PHÆDRUS

SOCRATES—PHÆDRUS

Soc. Whence come you, friend Phædrus, and 227
whither are you bound?

Ph. I come from Lysias, the son of Cephalus; and I am going for a walk outside the walls, as I have been sitting with him a long time, in fact ever since daybreak. And it is by the advice, Socrates, of our common friend Acumenus, that I take my walks in the open roads; for he tells me they are more refreshing than the covered promenades.

Soc. And he's right there, my good friend. So Lysias, it appears, was in the city.

Ph. Yes, staying with Epicrates at the Morychian mansion yonder, close by the Olympian.

Soc. Well, how did you pass your time there? though I can hardly doubt that Lysias regaled you with his speeches.

Ph. You shall hear, if you are not too much engaged to join me in my walk.

Soc. Engaged, indeed? don't you believe that in the words of Pindar I would count it

'a matter far above all engagement' to hear what passed between you and Lysias?

Ph. Come on then.

Soc. If you will begin your tale.

Ph. I will; and I can assure you, Socrates, you will find it very much in your way. For the speech which engaged our attention was in a certain fashion of an amatory character; that is to say, Lysias introduced one of our beautiful boys as being courted, but not by a lover; in fact, this is the very point on which he has displayed his ingenuity, as he maintains that favour ought to be shown to one who is not in love, rather than to one who is.

Soc. What a generous man! I wish he would maintain that poverty has a better claim than wealth, and age than youth; and in short, that the preference ought to be given to all the other properties that belong to myself in common with the bulk of mankind. In that case his speeches would indeed be delightful, and a public boon. But whether he does so or not, I have conceived such a desire to hear what he says, that even if you extend your walk to Megara, and, as Herodicus prescribes, go close up to the wall and then turn back again, you will not shake me off, I can promise you.

228 *Ph.* What are you talking about, my good friend Socrates? It took Lysias, the cleverest writer of the day, a long while to compose this speech at his leisure; and do you imagine that a novice like myself could repeat it from memory without doing injustice to the author?

No, that I am very sure I could not; and yet I would sooner be able to do so than come into the possession of a large sum of money.

Soc. My good friend Phædrus, if I do not know Phædrus, I do not know myself any longer. But neither the one nor the other is the case; I do know Phædrus; I know full well that on hearing Lysias read the speech, he was not content with hearing it once only, but kept urging him to repeat it again and again; and Lysias was quite as eager to comply. Phædrus however was not satisfied even with this, but at last took the book from the other's hands, and looked over again the parts he especially fancied. And being wearied with sitting all the morning thus engaged, he set out for a walk, though not, I fully believe, till he had learnt the entire speech by heart, unless it was a very long one. And he was going outside the walls to con it over by himself. But on his way he met with a man who is afflicted with a weakness for listening to speeches, and when he saw him he was charmed (oh so charmed) at the sight, for says he, 'I shall now have a friend to share in my raptures.' So he requested his friend to join him in his walk. When however this lover of speeches asked him to commence, he began to be coy, as though disinclined, albeit determined I am sure, if he could get no willing hearer, to speak out at last even to unwilling ears. Do you therefore, Phædrus, request him to do at once what at all events he is sure to do presently.

Ph. My wisest plan, there seems little doubt, is to repeat the speech as well as I am able; for I believe you have made up your mind on no account to let me go, till I have given it you in some way or other.

Soc. You have defined my intentions to a nicety.

Ph. Well then I'll do my best, though really, Socrates, I can assure you that I have not learnt the words by heart; but if you are content with a general view of the points of difference, as Lysias laid them down, between the claims of the impassioned and unimpassioned suitor, I am ready to go through them in order under their several heads, beginning where he began.

Soc. Thank you, my obliging friend; not till you have shown me though, what it is you have got there in your left hand beneath your cloak, as I have a shrewd suspicion that it is the speech itself. If so, I must beg you to understand that, fond as I am of you, I have yet no intention at all of lending myself for you to practise upon, while Lysias is also present. So let us see what you have got.

229 *Ph.* Enough, Socrates, I confess; you have dashed down the hope I entertained of practising my memory on you. But where would you like us to sit down and read the speech?

Soc. Let us turn aside here, and go down by the Ilissus, and then wherever we find a spot to our taste we will sit down and rest.

Ph. How lucky that I happened to come out without my shoes—and you, Socrates, we

know never wear them. Our easiest plan then is to walk along the streamlet with our feet in the water, and we shall find it by no means disagreeable, considering the season of the year, and the hour of the day.

Soc. Come on then, and keep at the same time a look-out for a seat.

Ph. Do you see that towering plane-tree yonder?

Soc. Of course I do.

Ph. Well, there we shall find shade and a gentle breeze, and grass enough for a seat, or if we prefer it, for a bed.

Soc. Let us walk towards it.

Ph. Tell me, Socrates, was it not from somewhere hereabouts on the Ilissus that Boreas is said to have carried off Orithyia?

Soc. So the tale goes.

Ph. Must it not have been from this very spot? So beautiful is the water here, so clear and transparent, and just such as one can fancy maidens loving to play by.

Soc. No, not here, but about a quarter of a mile lower down, just where we cross over to the temple of the Huntress. And if I am not mistaken, there is an altar on the spot to Boreas.

Ph. I have never noticed it. But tell me honestly, Socrates, do you believe this tale of mythology to be true?

Soc. Why, I should do nothing strangely out of the way if I *were* to refuse it credit, as the learned do; and go on in their rationalising method to say that as the girl was playing

with Pharmacæa she was blown over the adjoining cliffs by a blast of the wind Boreas; and that, having met with her death in this manner, she was fabled to have been carried off by the god Boreas—either from this place, or if you like from Mars's hill, which, according to another account, was the scene of her adventure. But for my part, Phædrus, though I consider such explanations sufficiently pretty, yet I esteem them the peculiar province of a very subtle, painstaking, and by no means particularly enviable person; if for no other reason than that he will be called upon, as soon as he has finished this subject, to set us right as to the form of the Hippocentaurs, and again as to that of the Chimæra, and then he will have pouring in upon him a like crowd of Gorgons and Pegasuses, and such a wondrous host of portentous and impossible creations, that if he were to disbelieve them all, and, with a kind of vulgar acuteness, apply to each successively the test of probability, he would require no small amount of time and labour for the task. But I have no leisure for such studies—and the reason, my friend, is this: I cannot as yet
230 obey the Delphic inscription, which bids me know myself; and it seems to me ridiculous for one who is still destitute of this knowledge to busy himself with matters which in no wise concern him. I therefore leave these subjects alone, and acquiescing in the received opinion regarding them I devote myself, as I just now said, to the study, not of fables, but of my own

self, that I may see whether I am really a more complicated and a more furious monster than Typhon, or a creature of a gentler and a simpler sort, the born heir of a divine and tranquil nature. But by the bye, Phædrus, was not this the tree to which you were leading me?

Ph. The very one.

Soc. Well, really, this *is* a glorious resting-place. For the plane-tree I find is thick and spreading, as well as tall, and the size and shadiness of the agnus castus here is very beautiful, and being at the height of its flower it must render our retreat most fragrant. How delicious too is this spring trickling under the plane-tree, and how cold its water, to judge by the foot! It would seem from these images and votive offerings that the place is sacred to some nymphs and river-god. Again, how lovely and enjoyable above measure is the airiness of the spot! summer-like and clear there rings an answer to the choir of the cicalas. But the most charming thing of all is this abundant grass, with its gentle slope just made for the head to fall back on luxuriously. Really, Phædrus, you make a most admirable guide.

Ph. And you, Socrates, are a most unaccountable being. In fact, as you say, you are just like a stranger who is being shown the beauties of the place, and not like a native of the country; the consequence this of your never leaving the city either to cross the frontier, or even, I do believe, for so much as a walk outside the walls.

Soc. You must bear with me, dear Phædrus —I am so fond of learning. Now trees, you know, and fields won't teach me anything, but men in the city will. You, however, would appear to have discovered the charm that can entice me out. For as shepherds draw after them their hungry flocks by shaking branches or grain up and down before their eyes, so could you, I believe, make me follow you, not only all round Attica, but also wherever else you might wish to lead, by simply holding out to me a written speech as a bait. And since we have reached this spot on the present occasion, I cannot do better than lay me down to listen, and do you choose that posture which you think most convenient for reading in, and begin the speech.

Ph. Attend then:

231 'With the state of my affairs you are acquainted, and that I expect advantage to us both from this arrangement you have heard. Now I claim not to be disappointed in my suit on the ground of my not belonging to the number of your lovers. For they repent of the benefits they have conferred the moment that their desire ceases; but for us, who never love, there is no particular time at which we may be expected to change our minds. For it is not under the influence of a resistless passion, but of our own free choice, that we do you a kindness, consulting what our means will allow, and what is best for our interests to bestow. Again, lovers take into consideration

the derangement of their private affairs which their love has occasioned, and the services they have rendered their favourites; and adding all the trouble they have taken to the reckoning, they conceive that by all this they have long ago paid the return which is due to the object of their affection. We, on the other hand, are not able to pretend that we have neglected our fortunes for love; we cannot take into account the labours we have endured, nor plead the domestic quarrels which have resulted from our devotion; so that, as our suit is divested of all such evils as these, we have nothing left us but cheerfully to do whatever we may think we shall please you by performing. Again, if it be a fair reason for setting store on a lover, that he professes greater attachment for his favourite than for any one else, and is ready both by word and deed to incur the enmity of all the world beside, if he can but gratify the object of his passion, it is easy to perceive that, if his profession be a true one, all of whom he may hereafter become enamoured will be held of greater account than his earlier love; and it is clear that, if the former wish it, he will not hesitate to do even harm to the latter. And how can you think it reasonable to lavish so costly a treasure on one suffering under a fatal infliction, which no man acquainted with its nature would even attempt to avert; when even the sufferer himself owns that his mind is diseased, and that he knows his own folly, but cannot control

himself? And when this man is restored to his senses, how can he possibly judge that to be well done about which he was so desirous when in such a state of mind? And further, if you were to select the best from among your lovers, your choice would be made from a small number; but if from the rest of the world you were to select the man who is most suitable to yourself, it would be made from a large number; so that there is far more reason to expect that in the larger number exists the one who is deserving of your attachment. If, moreover, you stand in awe of public opinion, and dread its reproaches on the affair being discovered, it is but natural to suppose that lovers, from an idea that others will deem them
232 as happy as they esteem themselves, will be so elated as to talk of their intimacy, and with ostentatious vanity give all men to know that their labour has not been spent in vain; but that we on the other hand, who by never loving never lose the dominion over ourselves, should prefer what is truly advantageous to any celebrity that is to be had in the world. Again, men cannot help hearing and seeing how lovers run after their favourites, and that too with elaborate parade; so that the mere fact of their being seen talking together is sufficient to give rise to suspicion; whereas no one would think of suspecting us for holding conversation with you, as they know that people cannot help talking with some one or other, either from friendship or for some other plea-

sure. And further, if you have ever conceived an alarm from remembering how difficult it is for a friendship to last, and from the reflection that in ordinary cases, when a quarrel has taken place, the misfortune is felt equally on both sides; but that in love, as it is you who have lavished what you prize most highly, so it is you who will suffer most deeply by a rupture; let me remind you that here again it is those who are in love that you have most reason to look upon with terror. For many are the causes that irritate lovers, and they think that everything is done to hurt and annoy them. For which reason also they are anxious to deter you from associating with the world, fearing those who are possessed of substance, lest they outbid them with money, and those who are educated, lest they outshine them in ability; and so, whatever may be the advantage a man possesses, they look with suspicion on his influence in that particular. If then they succeed in persuading you to abstain from society, they leave you at last without a friend in the world; but if, with an eye to your own interests, you adopt a different and wiser course, a quarrel will be the inevitable result. By us, on the other hand, who are not in love, but owe to our merit the accomplishment of our desires, no jealousy would be entertained for those who cultivate your acquaintance, but rather dislike for such as avoid it; as we should consider ourselves slighted by the neglect of the latter, but benefited by the in-

timacy of the former. And such being our feelings, surely you have reason to expect that friendship rather than hatred will result from our intercourse. And further, lovers frequently conceive a desire for the person before they have discovered the character or become acquainted with the other circumstances of their favourites, so that it is impossible for you to tell whether their disposition for friendship will outlast the continuance of their desire.
233 But when passion has never existed, when your favours have been obtained by those who were your friends before, it is not likely that this friendship will be lessened by what has been the source of so much delight—rather will the memory of the past be an earnest of future attachment. And further, you must not forget the superior opportunities of improvement which will be afforded you by favouring my suit. Lovers are so neglectful of your best interests, that they praise everything you say and do, partly for fear of giving offence, and partly because their own judgment is debased by their passion. For such are the caprices of love; if its victim be unsuccessful, it makes trifles which trouble no one else seem distressing to him; if successful, it exacts from him admiration for what contains no cause of satisfaction. So that I consider pity to be far more suitable than congratulation for the objects of such an attachment. I on the other hand, if you yield to my wishes, will associate with you on the following terms. Not consult-

ing our present gratification so much as our future advantage; not enslaved by passion, but master of myself; not ready to contract a violent animosity on slight provocation, but slow to conceive a moderate displeasure for serious offences, I will freely pardon all involuntary faults, while such as are intentional I will endeavour to correct. For such conduct is a sure sign of a friendship that will long endure. But if the thought, as is not unlikely, has suggested itself to you, that it is impossible for attachment to be strong if unaccompanied by passion, you ought to bear in mind, that in that case we should care but little either for our sons or for our fathers and mothers, nor should we ever possess faithful friends on any other footing than an amatory connection. Again, if it is proper to bestow favours most on those who need them most, it follows that from the world in general you ought to select, not the best, but the neediest as the objects of your charity—for the greater the misery they are rescued from, the greater is the debt of gratitude they will owe you. Nay, further, when you give an entertainment, you will be expected to ask not friends to your board, but those who beg an invitation and require a meal; for they will be charmed with your kindness, and will follow in your train and throng your doors, and express themselves highly delighted and deeply grateful, and invoke countless blessings on your head. It may be though that this is not the true ground of selection; it may be

that you ought to bestow your favours, not on those who need them most, but on those who
234 are best able to repay them; not on lovers merely, but on those who are worthy of the favour in question; not on men who will enjoy the flower of your youth, but on those who in your more advanced years will share with you *their* fortunes; not on such as when they have achieved their purpose will parade their success to the world, but on such as from feelings of delicacy will never open their mouths on the subject; not on suitors who sue you with a shortlived enthusiasm, but on friends who will continue friends all your life long; not on men who, when they are released from their passion, will seek some pretext for a quarrel, but on those who, when your bloom is faded, will then display their own true excellence. Remember now, I pray you, all I have said; and also bear in mind that lovers are taken to task by their friends on the score that their course of life is a bad one; whereas never have those who do not love been reproached by any of their relatives with neglecting on that account their private affairs. You may perhaps ask me whether I recommend you to bestow your favours on all who do not love you. But neither, I imagine, would a lover bid you entertain such sentiments towards all your lovers alike. No, if you view the matter reasonably, you cannot consider such conduct deserving of equal gratitude, nor, however you might wish it, would you be equally able to preserve the affair

secret from the world. And harm, you must remember, ought to accrue to neither from the transaction; advantage should rather result to both.'

My suit has now been urged with arguments which for my part I deem convincing—should you see in them any defect or omission, they are open to any questions you may choose to ask.

Well, Socrates, what do you think of the speech? Is it not wonderfully fine, especially in point of language?

Soc. Nay, divinely, my good friend; it quite threw me into an ecstasy. And this sensation I owe to you, Phædrus; for all the time you were reading, I kept my eye on your face, and saw it glow with rapture under the influence of the speech. And esteeming you a better judge in such matters than myself, I thought I could not do better than follow your example, and so I have shared with you in all your transports, my god-inspired friend.

Ph. Nay, Socrates, always so bent on jesting?

Soc. Jesting! don't you believe I am in earnest?

Ph. Oh, no more of this, Socrates; but tell me honestly, as you love me, do you believe that any man in Greece could write more ably and fully on the same subject?

Soc. How do you mean, Phædrus? Are we required to praise the speech for the fitness of its subject-matter, or merely on the ground that every word in it is clear, and rounded and polished off with a nice precision? If on the

former ground as well, it is only to please you
235 that I can comply; since for my part my incapacity is such, that I observed no excellence of the kind. For I was merely directing my attention to its rhetorical merit, though this I did not imagine even Lysias himself would consider sufficient. In fact, I thought, Phædrus —please correct me if I am wrong—that he repeated the same things two or three times over, as though he found it no such easy matter to say much on one subject. Perhaps, though, it was that he did not mind this sort of thing; nay, I could even fancy that he was showing off with a young man's display the power he possessed of expressing his ideas in two different ways, and in both with the finest possible language.

Ph. You are quite wrong, Socrates; the very merit which you deny is to be found in the speech in even an eminent degree. Of all appropriate topics which the subject contained, it has not omitted a single one; so that I am sure, that after what he has said no one could ever support the same position at greater length, or with arguments of greater value.

Soc. On this point, Phædrus, it will be no longer in my power to agree with you. For wise men and women of old time, who have written and spoken on the subject, will rise up and bear witness against me, if out of complaisance to you I make this concession.

Ph. Whom do you mean? where have you ever heard the subject better treated?

Soc. I cannot say just at the moment, though I am sure I have heard it somewhere, either perhaps by the fair Sappho, or the sage Anacreon, or may be by some prose writer or other. What leads me, you will ask, to this conclusion? The fact is, my worthy Phædrus, that my breast, I know not how, is full of matter, and I feel that I could be delivered of a speech different from, and in no wise inferior to this. Now that I have invented none of it myself, I am confident, as I am no stranger to my own stupidity. It remains then, I think, that like a pitcher I have been filled, through my ears, from some foreign springs; but here again so stupid am I, that I have quite forgotten both how and where I gained my information.

Ph. Never mind, Socrates, you have told me most excellent tidings; don't trouble yourself about telling me how or from whom you heard it, but just do the very thing that you say. Undertake to produce a speech of equal length and merit with that which I have got written here, without availing yourself of any of its arguments, and for my part I promise you, after the fashion of the nine archons, that I will dedicate to the god at Delphi a golden statue as large as life, not only of myself, but also of you.

Soc. You are very kind, Phædrus, and quite deserve the statue of gold, if you understand me to mean that Lysias missed his mark altogether, and that it is possible to produce a

speech which shall contain nothing that he said. No, I do not think this could be done with even the most worthless writer. Since, to take our present subject, do you suppose that any man who was maintaining the superior claims of the unimpassioned to those of the impassioned suitor, would be able to proceed with his arguments if he were to omit lauding the sanity of the one, and blaming the insanity
236 of the other? these being topics which are necessarily inherent in the proposition. No, such arguments ought, I think, to be allowed and conceded to the author; and in all such it is not the invention, but the arrangement that should be admired; whereas in those which, instead of being impossible to miss, are difficult to find, the invention as well as the arrangement may claim our approval.

Ph. I admit the distinction, as it appears to me to be fairly stated. And what is more, I will act up to it. I will allow you to assume that a man in love is in a more diseased condition than one who is not in love, and if, when this point is put out of the question on both sides, you surpass Lysias in the number and value of your arguments, you may expect to figure in massive gold at Olympia by the side of the offering of the Cypselidæ.

Soc. You have taken it quite to heart, Phædrus, that in teasing you I have laid hold upon your favourite; and I see you expect that I shall really attempt, in emulation of his skill, to produce something still more skilfully wrought.

Ph. For that matter, my friend, you have given me quite as good a hold on you. For speak you must as well as you are able; there is no help for it. But do take care that we are not compelled to have recourse to the vulgar stage-trick of retorting upon each other; pray don't force me to say as you did just now: 'My good Socrates, if I don't know Socrates, I don't know Phædrus any longer;' and again, 'Socrates is dying to speak, but affects to be coy.' No, make up your mind that we will not stir from this spot, till you have disclosed what you said you had in your breast. For here we are by ourselves in a retired place, and I am the younger and stronger man of the two. All which things being considered, you had better mind what I say, and determine to speak of your own free will rather than by compulsion.

Soc. But really, Phædrus, it would be ludicrous in a novice like me to set myself in comparison with an experienced author, and extemporise on a subject which he has discussed.

Ph. I'll tell you what it is, Socrates; you must let me have no more of this coquetting, as I am pretty sure I have that to say which will compel you to speak.

Soc. Pray don't say it then.

Ph. Nay, but I will, and here it is. And it shall be in the form of an oath. I swear to you—by whom, by what god shall I swear? Shall it be by this plane-tree? Yes, by this plane I swear, that if you do not produce your speech here before her, I will never again

either report or recite to you the speech of any author whatsoever.

Soc. Ah, wretch, well have you discovered the means of compelling a speech-enamoured man to do your bidding, whatever it be!

Ph. What makes you hang back, then?

Soc. I will do so no more, since you, Phædrus, have sworn this oath. For how could I ever have the heart to exclude myself
237 from such a feast?

Ph. Begin then.

Soc. Shall I tell you what I mean to do?

Ph. About what?

Soc. I mean to speak with my face covered, that I may hurry through the speech as quickly as possible, and not break down for shame, by looking at you.

Ph. Well, do but speak, and you may settle everything else as you like.

Soc. Come now, ye Muses called Ligæan, whether it be to the nature of your song, or to the music-loving race of the Ligyans that ye owe the name, — come help me in the tale which my kind friend here is forcing me to tell, in order that his favourite, who even heretofore seemed to him to be wise, may now seem wiser than ever.

There was once upon a time a boy, say rather a youth, of surpassing beauty. Now this youth had very many lovers; but one of them was a cunning fellow, who though he loved him no less warmly than his rivals, had made the youth believe that he loved him not.

And one day as he was urging his suit, he undertook to prove this very point, that the dispassionate suitor had a better claim on his favour than the impassioned lover. And here is his proof.

On every subject, my friend, there is but one mode of beginning for those who would deliberate well. They must know what the thing is on which they are deliberating, or else of necessity go altogether astray. Most men, however, are blind to the fact that they are ignorant of the essential character of each individual thing. Fancying therefore that they possess this knowledge, they come to no mutual understanding at the outset of their inquiry; and in the sequel they exhibit the natural consequence, an inconsistency with themselves and each other. Let not you and me then fall into the error which we condemn in others; but since the question before us is, whether love or the absence of love is desirable in friendship, let us first establish by mutual consent a definition of love that will explain its nature and its powers; and then, with this to look back upon and refer to, let us proceed to consider whether it is profitable or injurious in its results. Now that love is a kind of desire is clear to every one, and equally clear is it on the other hand, that without being in love we desire beautiful objects. How then are we to mark the lover? We should further observe, that in every one of us there are two ruling and directing principles, whose guidance we follow

wherever they may lead; the one being an innate desire of pleasure; the other, an acquired judgment which aspires after excellence. Now these two principles at one time maintain harmony; while at another they are at feud within us, and now one and now the other obtains the mastery. When judgment leads us with sound reason to virtue, and asserts its authority, we assign to that authority the name of temperance; but when desire drags us irrationally to pleasures, and has established its sway within us, that sway is denominated excess. Now
238 excess, you must know, is a thing of many names, as it is of many parts and many forms. And of these forms, that which may happen to have obtained the predominance brands its possessor with its own name, and that one neither honourable nor worth possessing. For instance, when desire in regard of eating gets the better of the highest reason and the other desires, it will be termed gluttony, and cause its possessor to be called a glutton. If again it has usurped dominion in the matter of drinking, and drags the individual affected by it in this direction, I need not say what designation it will acquire. And since in general names akin to these names are applied to desires akin to these desires, it is sufficiently clear what is the proper appellation of the desire which for the time being happens to be dominant. Now my motive for introducing these previous remarks must by this time be pretty well evident; but nothing is so clear that it

does not admit of becoming clearer by being spoken. When desire, having rejected reason and overpowered judgment which leads to right, is set in the direction of the pleasure which beauty can inspire, and when again under the influence of its kindred desires it is moved with violent motion towards the beauty of corporeal forms, it acquires a surname from this very violent motion, and is called love. But by the way, my dear Phædrus, do I appear to you, as I do to myself, to have been speaking under some influence divine?

Ph. There certainly can be no doubt, Socrates, that an unusual kind of fluency has come upon you.

Soc. Hearken then in silence to my words, for in very truth the place where we are sitting seems holy ground. So that if haply in the course of my oration I become entranced by the spirits of the spot, you must not marvel thereat; for my present utterance falls no longer far short of a dithyrambic strain.

Ph. Most true; it does not.

Soc. And for this, Phædrus, *you* are answerable. But listen to the remainder of my speech, for it may be that I shall escape the trance. This, however, will be as Heaven pleases; for ourselves, we must return in our discourse to the beautiful boy.

Come then, my excellent youth. Since the definition of the subject under discussion has been stated and accurately marked, let us now

keep this in our view, while we proceed to consider what advantage or injury is likely to result to you from favouring the wishes of an impassioned and unimpassioned suitor respectively. If a man be governed by desire and the slave of pleasure, he must of necessity, I think, endeavour to render his beloved the source of as much pleasure to himself as he possibly can. Now, to a sick man everything gives pleasure that does not oppose itself to his wishes, but whatever asserts a superiority or even an equality, excites his dislike. A lover, therefore, if he can help it, will not bear his favourite to be either superior to or on a level
239 with himself, but is always striving to lower him and make him inferior. Now ignorance is inferior to learning, cowardice to courage, incapacity as a speaker to oratorical skill, heaviness of intellect to a ready wit. Such, among many others, are the mental defects which a lover must needs rejoice to find in his loved one if they are naturally inherent, and which, if they result from education, he must endeavour to instil, or else forfeit his immediate gratification. The consequence is, that your lover will regard you with a jealous eye, and by debarring you from many valuable acquaintances, the cultivation of which would be most conducive to your growth in manliness, he will do you serious harm, and the greatest harm of all by excluding you from that which would make you most truly wise; I mean the study of Divine Philosophy, from which your lover

will be sure to keep you as far as possible asunder, for fear of your there learning to despise him. And not content with this, he will so scheme as to leave you in total ignorance of every subject whatever, so that on every subject you may be compelled to look to him for information; as this is the condition for you to be in that will cause him the keenest delight, but yourself the most ruinous harm. So far then as mental improvement is concerned, you cannot have a less profitable guide and companion than a suitor who is under the influence of love.

Let us now proceed to consider what will be your corporeal habit, and what your course of bodily discipline, if you have for your lord and master a man who cannot help pursuing pleasure in preference to virtue. Such a person will be seen running after a delicate stripling, not hardy in frame nor reared beneath a scorching sun, but fondled under the shade of blending trees; a stranger to manly toil and healthful sweatings, but no stranger to the softness of a woman's life, decking his person with false colours and ornaments, in lack of nature's graces, and given in short to all such practices as are the natural concomitants of these. What they are, you know so well that I need not dilate on them further; but, summing them up under one general head, I will proceed to another branch of my subject. They are such that the youth whose body is trained in them will not fail in time of battle and all serious

emergencies to inspire his enemies with confidence, but his friends and even his lovers with alarm.

To pass from these obvious reflections, let us in the next place examine what advantage or what injury to your fortune we may expect to find resulting from the companionship and management of a lover. Clear it must be to every one, and to the lover himself most of all, that there is nothing he would pray for so earnestly as for the object of his attachment to be deprived of his dearest, fondest, and holiest treasures. Gladly would he see him bereft of father and mother, of relations and friends, as in them he views only so many censors and obstacles in the way of that commerce with his beloved which he loves most dearly. Moreover, if a youth be possessed of property in gold or other kind of substance, he will not appear so ready a prey, nor so easy of management when caught in the toils. And thus it cannot possibly be but that a lover will grudge his favourite the possession of fortune, and rejoice sincerely in its loss. Nay more, he would fain have him remain as long as possible without wife, or child, or home, in his desire of reaping for the longest time he can the full enjoyment of his own delights.

There are, I am aware, other evils beside this in the world, though few with which some deity has not mingled a temporary gratification. A parasite, for instance, is a shocking and a baneful monster, yet still nature has infused

into his blandishments a not unpolished charm. A mistress moreover may be condemned as a dangerous evil; and the same objection may be made to a variety of similar creatures and pursuits, which are yet capable of affording, for the passing hour at least, the keenest enjoyment. But a lover, beside being detrimental to his favourite, is of all distasteful things the most distasteful in daily intercourse. We are told by an ancient saying, that youth is pleased with youth, and age with age: I suppose because a similarity of years, leading to a similarity of pleasures, by virtue of resemblance engenders friendship. But yet the intercourse even of equals is not unattended by satiety. And further, in every transaction every one, it is said, finds compulsion irksome; and this is an evil which, in addition to their want of sympathy, is felt in the highest degree by the favourite in the society of his lover. For an old man is the companion of a young one, never leaving him if he can help it by day or by night, but driven onward by a resistless frenzy, which is all the while ministering to him indeed exquisite pleasure as long as by his sight, his hearing, his touch, his every sense, he is made aware of the presence of the beautiful boy, so that he would love nothing better than to cling to his side unceasingly: but as for the object of that attachment, what kind of solace, I ask, or what pleasure, can he possibly receive in return to save him during all that long companionship from reaching the

very extremity of disgust; when he has ever before his eyes the bloomless countenance of age, and that too with all those accompaniments which we cannot hear even spoken of without repugnance, much less feel actually forced upon us by an ever-pressing necessity; when he has, moreover, on every occasion, and in all company, to be on his guard against censorious observation; when he has to listen either to unseasonable and extravagant praises, or, with equal probability, to unendurable reproaches from his lover's sober caprice, while from his drunken excess he may expect an unveiled and loathsome licentiousness of speech, which is not only intolerable, but infamous to hear.

And if, during the continuance of his passion, a lover is at once hurtful and disgusting, as surely, when his passion is over, will he be for the remainder of his life a traitor to one whom with many promises, aye and many an oath
241 and prayer, he could scarcely prevail on to endure the present burden of his society in hope of future advantage. Yes, I say, at the time when payment should be made, he finds that he has received within his breast a new ruler and a new lord, to wit, wisdom and temperance, in the stead of passion and madness, and that he is become a new man, without his favourite being conscious of the change. So the youth demands a return for former favours, and reminds him of all that has passed between them in word and deed, under the impression

that he is speaking to the same person. But the other, for very shame, dares neither avow the alteration that has come upon him, nor can he bring himself to fulfil the oaths and promises of that former insensate reign, now that wisdom and temperance have set their throne in his heart, for fear that, if he should act as he did before, he might become like what he was before, and return back again to his old condition. And thus it is that he is a runaway, and of necessity a defrauder, where once he was a lover, and in the turning of a potsherd is changed from pursuer into pursued: for the youth is compelled to give chase with indignation and curses, having alas! been ignorant from the very first, that he ought not to bestow his favours on one who was in love, and of consequence a madman, but much rather on one who did not love and retained his senses; as in the former case he would have to surrender himself to a faithless, peevish, jealous wretch, who would do harm to his substance, and harm to his bodily habit, but far the greatest harm to the cultivation of his soul, than which in the eyes both of gods and men there neither is nor ever will be aught more dearly prized. Think deeply, my beautiful boy, on the words I have spoken, and remember that a lover's friendship is no attachment of good will, but that with an appetite which lusts for repletion,

As wolves love lambs, so lovers love their loves.

Ah Phædrus, the very thing I dreaded! You

must not expect to hear another word from me, but be content that my speech should terminate here.

Ph. Why, Socrates, I thought it was only half finished, and that it would have quite as much to say in supporting the claim of the unimpassioned suitor, and enumerating the advantages which he has to offer in opposition. How is it then that you are leaving off now?

Soc. Did you not observe, my learned friend, that I had already got beyond dithyrambics, and was giving utterance to epics, and that too, while engaged in blaming? Pray what do you imagine will become of me, if I commence a panegyric? don't you know that of a certainty I shall be lifted into ecstasy by the nymphs to whose influence you have designedly exposed me? For fear then of such a fate, I tell you in a single word, that for all the evil I have spoken of the one, I attribute just the opposite good to the other. And what need of a protracted discourse, when enough has been said upon both sides? And thus my tale will meet
242 with that reception which it deserves: and for myself I will cross the stream, and go home before you force me into something more serious still.

Ph. Not yet, Socrates, not till the heat of the day is past. Don't you see that the sun is already near standing still at high noon, as they phrase it? so pray wait, and let us talk over together what has been said, and return home as soon as it becomes cool.

Soc. You are a strange person with your speeches, Phædrus; you quite amaze me. I do believe, that of all the speeches that have been composed during your lifetime, a greater number owe their existence to you than to any other person in the world, whether they be of your own composition, or extorted from some one else by fair means or foul. If we except Simmias of Thebes, there is no one who will bear competition with you. And now again I believe we shall find another speech which will have to thank you for its delivery.

Ph. No bad tidings these, certainly; but how is this the case, and what speech do you mean?

Soc. Just as I was about to cross the river, I was made aware of my divine monitor's wonted sign—now it never occurs save to deter me from something or other I am intending to do—and methought therefrom I heard a voice from this very spot, forbidding me to depart hence till I had purified myself, as though I had been guilty of some offence against Heaven. Now, you must know, I possess something of prophetic skill, though no very great amount, but, like indifferent writers, just enough for my own purposes. And thus it is that I have now at last a clear perception of my error. I say at last, because I can assure you, my good friend, that the soul too is in some sort prophetic. For mine pricked me some time ago, as I was uttering that speech, and my face, as Ibycus says, was

darkened for fear lest I might be purchasing honour on earth by some offence at the high court of heaven. But now I have discovered my sin.

Ph. And pray what was it?

Soc. That was a shocking, shocking speech which you brought here yourself, Phædrus, and so was the one you forced me to utter.

Ph. In what way were they shocking?

Soc. They were foolish, and somewhat impious withal; and what can be more shocking than this?

Ph. Nothing, if your charge be a true one.

Soc. And is it not? Don't you believe Love to be the son of Aphrodite, and a god?

Ph. He is said to be so, certainly.

Soc. Certainly not by Lysias, nor by that speech of yours which found utterance through my lips after they had been bewitched by you. No, if Love be, as indeed he is, a god, or of godly sort, he cannot be aught that is evil; yet as such he is represented in both our speeches. This, therefore, is the offence they were guilty of with regard to Love; and not only this, but with a *naïveté* that is highly amusing, though they do not utter a single sound or true word
248 throughout, they yet talk as gravely as if they were of consequence, on the strength, it may be, of expecting to impose upon some poor simpletons, and win a fair name among them. I therefore, for my part, Phædrus, must of necessity purify myself. And for all who sin in matter of legends, there is an ancient form

of purification with which Stesichorus was acquainted, though Homer was not. For when he was deprived of his eyesight for maligning Helen, he was not ignorant, like Homer, of the cause, but a true votary of the Muses, he learnt his fault, and straightway sang

> False was my tale—unpassed the rolling sea,
> And Troy's proud turrets never viewed by thee.

And so, having composed all his palinode, as it is called, he immediately recovered his sight. I, however, will be wiser than either of those bards in one particular. Ere any evil befall me for my defamation of Love, I will offer him my palinode by way of atonement, with my head bare, and no longer, as before, muffled up for shame.

Ph. You could not have said anything that would give me greater pleasure than this.

Soc. I believe you, my good friend; for you feel as well as I do, how shameless was the tone of both our speeches. For just conceive their being overheard by some gentleman of mild and generous feeling, who is either now, or has at some past time of his life been, enamoured of a youth of congenial disposition. If, for instance, he were to hear us maintaining that on slight provocation lovers contract violent animosities, and make both jealous and dangerous companions to their favourites, do you think it possible that he could help fancying himself listening to persons who had been bred among sailors, and had never witnessed

an ingenuous passion, and would he not, think you, be very far from admitting the justice of our censures on love?

Ph. I don't doubt it, Socrates.

Soc. Out of delicacy then to such a lover as this, and for fear of the god of love himself, I desire by a fresh and sweet discourse to wash out, so to speak, the brackish taste of the stuff we have just heard. And I would recommend Lysias too to make all the haste he can to prove that, under similar circumstances, the suit of a lover should be preferred to that of one who is not in love.

Ph. You need have no doubt of this being done, Socrates. If you deliver your panegyric on love, Lysias most certainly shall not escape composing another on the same side.

Soc. Well, I can trust you for this, so long as you are the man you are.

Ph. Speak on then with confidence.

Soc. But where, I want to know, is the boy to whom I addressed my former speech, as I should be sorry for him to run away without hearing this as well, and favour in his haste the suit of an unimpassioned wooer.

Ph. Here he is by your side, quite ready for you when you want him.

Soc. You must understand then, my beautiful boy, that my late speech was the production of
244 the gay Phædrus, son of the fame-loving Pythocles, the nursling of the myrtle-beds of Myrrhinus; but that I am indebted for the one I am now about to deliver to the inspired

bard Stesichorus, son of the holy Euphemus, bred at Himera in the mysteries of love. Now, it must begin on this wise:

False is the tale which says that when a lover is present, favour ought rather to be shown to one, who is no lover, on the score, forsooth, of the one being mad and the other sane. For if it were true, without exception, that madness is an evil, there would be no harm in the assertion; but, as it is, we owe our greatest blessings to madness, if only it be granted by Heaven's bounty. For the prophetess at Delphi, you are well aware, and the priestesses of Dodona, have in their moments of madness done great and glorious service to the men and the cities of Greece, but little or none in their sober mood. And if we were to speak of the Sibyl and all others, that by exercise of inspired divination have told beforehand many things to many men, and thereby guided them aright in their future courses, we should run to a great length in telling only what every one knows. There is one fact, however, to which it would be worth our while solemnly to appeal; I mean that, in the opinion of the name-givers of ancient times, madness was no disgrace or reproach; else they would never have attached this very name to that most glorious art whereby the future is discerned. No, it was because they judged of it as a glorious thing when inspired by Heaven's grace, that they gave it the name of *μανική*; it is only the vulgar taste of a later age, that by

inserting the *tau* has made it μαντικὴ instead. Since you will find, in like manner, that the investigation of the future, which is carried on by people in their senses through the medium of birds and other signs, received at first the name of οἰονοϊστικὴ, inasmuch as by means of thought, men furnished themselves out of their own minds with intelligence and information; but moderns, not content with this word, gave it dignity with their long o, and called it οἰωνιστικὴ. As much then as divination is a more perfect and a more precious thing than augury both in name and efficiency, so much more glorious, by the testimony of the ancients, is madness than sober sense, the inspiration of Heaven than the creation of men. Again, for those sore plagues and dire afflictions, which you are aware lingered in certain families as the wraith of some old ancestral guilt, madness devised a remedy, after it had entered into the heart of the proper persons, and to the proper persons revealed its secrets; for it fled for refuge to prayer and services of the gods, and thence obtaining purifications and atoning rites made its possessor whole for time present and time to come, by showing him the way of escape from the evils that encompassed him, if
245 only he were rightly frenzied and possessed. And thirdly, there is a possession and a madness inspired by the Muses, which seizes upon a tender and a virgin soul, and, stirring it up to rapturous frenzy, adorns in ode and other verse the countless deeds of elder time for the

instruction of after ages. But whosoever without the madness of the Muses comes to knock at the doors of poesy, from the conceit that haply by force of art he will become an efficient poet, departs with blasted hopes, and his poetry, the poetry of sense, fades into obscurity before the poetry of madness.

Such, and yet more, are the glorious results I can tell you of as proceeding from a madness inspired by the gods. Let us not therefore regard with apprehension the particular result we are considering, nor be perplexed and frightened by any arguments into the belief that we ought to select the sensible rather than the enraptured man as our friend. No, our opponent must not carry off the palm of victory till he has likewise made it evident, that for no good is love sent from heaven to lover and beloved. With us, on the other hand, rests the proof that such a madness as this is given by God to man for his highest possible happiness. Now my proof, I am aware, will meet with no credit from the subtle disputant, but in the eyes of the truly wise it will be convincing. First of all then I must investigate the truth with regard to the nature of the soul, both human and divine, by observing its conditions and powers. And thus do I begin my demonstration.

Every soul is immortal—for whatever is in perpetual motion is immortal. Now the thing which moves another and is by another moved, as it may cease to be moved, may cease also

to live; it is only that which moves itself, inasmuch as it never quits itself, that never ceases moving, but is to everything else that is moved a source and beginning of motion. Now a beginning is uncreate; for everything that is created must be created from a beginning, but a beginning itself from nothing whatever: for if a beginning were created from anything, it would not be a beginning. Again, since it is uncreate, it must also of necessity be indestructible. For if a beginning be destroyed, it can neither itself be at any time created from anything, nor can anything else be created from it, if, as is evidently true, everything must be created from a beginning. Thus we see then that that which is self-moved is the beginning of motion, and as being such can neither be created nor destroyed; else must all the universe and all creation collapse and come to a standstill, and never at any time find that whereby they may be again set in motion and come into being. And now that that which is moved by itself has been found to be immortal, none will hesitate to assert that this power of self-motion is implied in the very essence and definition of a soul. For every body which receives motion from without we call soulless; but that, which receives motion from within of itself, we say is possessed of soul, as though in this lay the soul's very
246 nature. And if it be true, that that which is self-moved is nothing else than the soul, it follows of necessity that the soul must be a

thing both uncreate and immortal. For its immortality let this suffice.

In considering its form let us proceed in the following manner. To explain what the soul is, would be a long and most assuredly a god-like labour; to say what it resembles, is a shorter and a human task. Let us attempt then the latter; let us say that the soul resembles the combined efficacy of a pair of winged steeds and a charioteer. Now the horses and drivers of the gods are all both good themselves and of good extraction, but the character and breed of all others is mixed. In the first place, with us men the supreme ruler has a pair of horses to manage, and then of these horses he finds one generous and of generous breed, the other of opposite descent and opposite character. And thus it necessarily follows that driving in our case is no easy or agreeable work. We must at this point endeavour to express what we mean respectively by a mortal and an immortal animal. All that is soul presides over all that is without soul, and patrols all heaven, now appearing in one form and now in another. When it is perfect and fully feathered, it roams in upper air, and regulates the entire universe; but the soul that has lost its feathers is carried down till it finds some solid resting-place; and when it has settled there, when it has taken to itself, that is, an earthly body, which seems capable of self-motion, owing to the power of its new inmate, the name of animal is given to

the whole; to this compound, I mean, of soul and body, with the addition of the epithet mortal. The immortal, on the other hand, has received its name from the conclusion of no human reasoning; but without having either seen or formed any adequate conception of a god, we picture him to ourselves as an immortal animal, possessed of soul and possessed of body, and of both in intimate conjunction from all eternity. But this matter I leave to be and to be told as Heaven pleases—my task is to discover what is the cause that makes the feathers fall off the soul. It is something, I conceive, of the following kind.

The natural efficacy of a wing is to lift up heavy substances, and bear them aloft to those upper regions which are inhabited by the race of the gods. And of all the parts connected with the body it has perhaps shared most largely (with the soul) in the divine nature. Now of this nature are beauty, wisdom, virtue, and all similar qualities. By these then the plumage of the soul is chiefly fostered and increased; by ugliness, vice, and all such contraries, it is wasted and destroyed. Zeus, the great chieftain in heaven, driving a winged car, travels first, arranging and presiding over all things; and after him comes a host of gods and inferior deities, marshalled in eleven divi-
247 sions, for Hestia stays at home alone in the mansion of the gods; but all the other ruling powers, that have their place in the number of the twelve, march at the head of a troop in

the order to which they have been severally appointed. Now there are, it is true, many ravishing views and opening paths within the bounds of heaven, whereon the family of the blessed gods go to and fro, each in performance of his own proper work; and they are followed by all who from time to time possess both will and power; for envy has no place in the celestial choir. But whenever they go to feast and revel, they forthwith journey by an uphill path to the summit of the heavenly vault. Now the chariots of the gods being of equal poise, and obedient to the rein, move easily, but all others with difficulty; for they are burdened by the horse of vicious temper, which sways and sinks them towards the earth, if haply he has received no good training from his charioteer. Whereupon there awaits the soul a crowning pain and agony. For those which we called immortal go outside when they are come to the topmost height, and stand on the outer surface of heaven, and as they stand they are borne round by its revolution, and gaze on the external scene. Now of that region beyond the sky no earthly bard has ever yet sung or ever will sing in worthy strains. But this is the fashion of it; for sure I must venture to speak the truth, especially as truth is my theme. Real existence, colourless, formless, and intangible, visible only to the intelligence which sits at the helm of the soul, and with which the family of true science is concerned, has its abode in this region. The mind then of deity,

as it is fed by intelligence and pure science, and the mind of every soul that is destined to receive its due inheritance, is delighted at seeing the essence to which it has been so long a stranger, and by the light of truth is fostered and made to thrive, until, by the revolution of the heaven, it is brought round again to the same point. And during the circuit it sees distinctly absolute justice, and absolute temperance, and absolute science; not such as they appear in creation, nor under the variety of forms to which we nowadays give the name of realities, but the justice, the temperance, the science, which exist in that which is real and essential being. And when in like manner it has seen all the rest of the world of essence, and feasted on the sight, it sinks down again into the interior of heaven, and returns to its own home. And on its arrival, the charioteer takes his horses to the manger, and sets before them ambrosia, and gives them nectar to drink
248 with it. Such is the life of the gods; but of the other souls, that which follows a god most closely and resembles him most nearly, succeeds in raising the head of its charioteer into the outer region, and is carried round with the immortals in their revolution, though sore encumbered by its horses, and barely able to contemplate the real existences; while another rises and sinks by turns, his horses plunging so violently that he can discern no more than a part of these existences. But the common herd follow at a distance, all of them indeed

burning with desire for the upper world, but, failing to reach it, they make the revolution in the moisture of the lower element, trampling on one another, and striking against one another, in their efforts to rush one before the other. Hence ensues the extremest turmoil and struggling and sweating; and herein, by the awkwardness of the drivers, many souls are maimed, and many lose many feathers in the crush; and all after painful labour go away without being blessed by admission to the spectacle of truth, and thenceforth live on the food of mere opinion.

And now will I tell you the motives of this great anxiety to behold the fields of truth. The suitable pasturage for the noblest portion of the soul is grown on the meadows there, and it is the nature of the wing, which bears aloft the soul, to be fostered thereby; and moreover, there is an irrevocable decree, that if any soul has followed a god in close companionship and discerned any of the true essences, it shall continue free from harm till the next revolution, and if it be ever thus successful, it shall be ever thus unharmed: but whenever, from inability to follow, it has missed that glorious sight, and, through some mishap it may have encountered, has become charged with forgetfulness and vice, and been thereby so burdened as to shed its feathers and fall to the earth, in that case there is a law that the soul thus fallen be not planted in any bestial nature during the first generation, but that if it has seen more than

others of essential verity, it pass into the germ of a man who is to become a lover of wisdom, or a lover of beauty, or some votary of the Muses and Love; if it be of second rank, it is to enter the form of a constitutional ruler, a warrior, or a man fitted for command; the third will belong to a politician, or economist, or merchant; the fourth, to a laborious professor of gymnastics, or some disciple of the healing art; the fifth will be possessed by a soothsayer, or some person connected with mysteries; the sixth will be best suited by the life of a poet or some other imitative artist; the seventh, by the labour of an artisan or a farmer; the eighth, by the trade of a sophist or a demagogue; and the ninth, by the lot of an absolute monarch. And in all these various conditions those who have lived justly receive afterwards a better lot; those who have lived unjustly, a worse. For to that same place from which each soul set out, it does not re-
249 turn for ten thousand years; so long is it before it recovers its plumage, unless it has belonged to a guileless lover of philosophy, or a philosophic lover of boys. But these souls, during their third millennium, if only they have chosen thrice in succession this form of existence, do in this case regain their feathers, and at its conclusion wing their departure. But all the rest are, on the termination of their first life, brought to trial; and, according to their sentence, some go to the prison-houses beneath the earth, to suffer for their sins; while others,

by virtue of their trial, are borne lightly upwards to some celestial spot, where they pass their days in a manner worthy of the life they have lived in their mortal form. But in the thousandth year both divisions come back again to share and choose their second life, and they select that which they severally please. And then it is that a human soul passes into the life of a beast, and from a beast who was once a man the soul comes back into a man again. For the soul which has never seen the truth at all can never enter into the human form; it being a necessary condition of a man that he should apprehend according to that which is called a generic form, which, proceeding from a variety of perceptions, is by reflection combined into unity. And this is nothing more nor less than a recollection of those things which in time past our soul beheld when it travelled with a god, and, looking high over what we now call real, lifted up its head into the region of eternal essence. And thus you see it is with justice that the mind of the philosopher alone recovers its plumage, for to the best of its power it is ever fixed in memory on that glorious spectacle, by the contemplation of which the godhead is divine. And it is only by the right use of such memorials as these, and by ever perfecting himself in perfect mysteries, that a man becomes really perfect. But because such an one stands aloof from human interests, and is rapt in contemplation of the divine, he is taken

to task by the multitude as a man demented, because the multitude do not see that he is by God inspired.

It will now appear what conclusion the whole course of our argument has reached with regard to the fourth kind of madness, with which a man is inspired whenever, by the sight of beauty in this lower world, the true beauty of the world above is so brought to his remembrance that he begins to recover his plumage, and feeling new wings longs to soar aloft; but the power failing him gazes upward like a bird, and becomes heedless of all lower matters, thereby exposing himself to the imputation of being crazed. And the conclusion is this, that of all kinds of enthusiasm this is the best, as well in character as in origin, for those who possess it, whether fully or in part; and further, that he who loves beautiful objects must partake of this madness before he can deserve the name of lover. For though, as I said before, every man's soul has by the law of his birth been a spectator of eternal truth, or it would never have passed
250 into this our mortal frame, yet still it is no easy matter for all to be reminded of their past by their present existence. It is not easy either for those who, during that struggle I told you of, caught but a brief glimpse of upper glories, nor for those who, after their fall to this world, were so unfortunate as to be turned aside by evil associations into the paths of wickedness, and so made to forget that holy spectacle. Few, few only are there left, with whom the

world of memory is duly present. And these few, whenever they see here any resemblance of what they witnessed there, are struck with wonder, and can no longer contain themselves, though what it is that thus affects them they know not, for want of sufficient discernment. Now in the likenesses existing here of justice, and temperance, and all else which souls hold precious, there is no brightness; but through the medium of dull dim instruments it is but seldom and with difficulty that people are enabled on meeting with the copies to recognise the character of the original. But beauty not only shone brightly on our view at the time when in the heavenly choir we, for our part, followed in the band of Zeus, as others in the bands of other gods, and saw that blissful sight and spectacle, and were initiated into that mystery which I fear not to pronounce the most blessed of all mysteries; for we who celebrated it were perfect and untainted by the evil that awaited us in time to come, and perfect too, and simple, and calm, and blissful were the visions which we were solemnly admitted to gaze upon in the purest light, ourselves being no less pure, nor as yet entombed in that which we now drag about with us and call the body, being fettered to it as an oyster to his shell. Excuse my so far indulging memory, which has carried me to a greater length than I intended, in my yearning for a happiness that is past. I return to beauty. Not only, as I said before, did she shine brightly

among her fellows there, but when we came hither we found her, through the medium of our clearest sense, gleaming far more clearly than them all. For sight is the keenest of our bodily senses, though it fails of distinguishing wisdom. For terrible would be the passion inspired by her, or by any other of those lovely realities, if they exhibited to the eye of sense any such clear resemblance of themselves as is the image afforded by beauty. No, to beauty alone is the privilege given of being at once most conspicuous and most lovely. The man, it is true, whose initiation is of ancient date, or who has lost his purity here, is slow in being carried hence to the essential beauty of the upper world, when he sees that which bears its name in this. Accordingly, he feels no reverence as he gazes on the beautiful object, but, abandoning himself to lust, attempts like a brute beast to gratify his appetite, and in his
251 wanton approaches knows nor fear nor shame at this unnatural pursuit of pleasure. But whenever one who is fresh from those mysteries, who saw much of that heavenly vision, beholds in any godlike face or form a successful copy of original beauty, he first of all feels a shuddering chill, and there creep over him some of those terrors that assailed him in that dire struggle; then, as he continues to gaze, he is inspired with a reverential awe, and did he not fear the repute of exceeding madness, he would offer sacrifice to his beloved as to the image of a god. Afterwards follow the natural results of

his chill, a sudden change, a sweating and glow of unwonted heat. For he has received through his eyes the emanation of beauty, and has been warmed thereby, and his native plumage is watered. And by the warmth the parts where the feathers sprout are softened, after having been long so closed up by their hardness as to hinder the feathers from growing. But as soon as this nourishing shower pours in, the quill of the feather begins to swell, and struggles to start up from the root, and spread beneath the whole surface of the soul; for in old time the soul was entirely feathered.

In this process therefore it boils and throbs all over, and exactly the same sensation which is experienced by children when cutting their teeth, a sensation of itching and soreness about their gums, is experienced by the soul of one who is beginning to put forth new wings; it boils and is sore and tingles as it shoots its feathers. Whenever indeed by gazing on the beauty of the beloved object, and receiving from that beauty particles which fall and flow in upon it (and which are therefore called ἵμερος, desire), the soul is watered and warmed, it is relieved from its pain, and is glad; but as soon as it is parted from its love, and for lack of that moisture is parched, the mouths of the outlets, by which the feathers start, become so closed up by drought, that they obstruct the shooting germs; and the germs being thus confined underneath, in company of the desire which has been infused, leap like throbbing

arteries, and prick each at the outlet which is shut against it; so that the soul, being stung all over, is frantic with pain. But then again it calls to mind the beautiful one, and rejoices. And both these feelings being combined, it is sore perplexed by the strangeness of its condition, and not knowing what to do with itself, becomes frenzied, and in its frenzy can neither sleep by night, nor by day remain at rest, but runs to and fro with wistful look wherever it may expect to see the possessor of the beauty. And after it has seen him, and drunk in fresh streams of desire, it succeeds in opening the stoppages which absence had made, and taking breath it enjoys a respite from sting and throe, and now again delights itself for the time being in that most delicious pleasure. And therefore, if it can help, it never quits the side of its
252 beloved, nor holds any one of more account than him, but forgets mother, and brothers, and friends, and though its substance be wasting by neglect, it regards that as nothing, and of all observances and decorums, on which it prided itself once, it now thinks scorn, and is ready to be a slave and lie down as closely as may be allowed to the object of its yearnings; for, besides its reverence for the possessor of beauty, it has found in him the sole physician for its bitterest pains. Now this affection, my beautiful boy—you I mean to whom my speech is addressed—is called by mortals Eros (love); on hearing its name among the gods, your young wit will naturally laugh. There are put

forth, if I mistake not, by certain Homerids, out of their secret poems, two verses on Eros, of which the second is quite outrageous, and not at all particularly metrical. Thus they sing:

Him mortals indeed call winged Eros,
But immortals Pteros (Flyer), for his flighty nature.

Now these verses you may believe or not believe, as you think proper; but whatever is thought of them the cause of love, and the condition of lovers, is all the same, just such as has been here stated.

Now, if it be one of the former followers of Zeus who is seized by love, he is able to bear in greater weight than others the burden of the wing-named god. But all who were in the service of Ares, and patrolled the heavens in his company, when they are taken captive by Love, and fancy themselves in aught injured by the object of their love, are thirsty of blood, and ready to immolate both themselves and their favourites. And so it is with the followers of the other gods. Every man spends his life in honouring and imitating to the best of his power that particular god of whose choir he was a member, so long as he is exempt from decay, and living his first generation here; and in keeping with the bent thus acquired, he conducts his intercourse and behaviour towards the beloved object, as well as all the world. Accordingly, each man chooses himself his love out of the ranks of beauty to suit his

peculiar turn; and then, as though his choice were his god, he builds him up for himself, and attires him like a holy image, for the purpose of doing him reverence, and worshipping him with ecstatic festival. They then that belong to Zeus seek to have for their beloved one who resembles Zeus in his soul. And so they look for a youth who is by nature a lover of wisdom, and fitted for command; and when they have found one, and become enamoured of him, they strive all they can to make him truly such. And if they have never previously entered upon this task, they now apply themselves to it, both seeking instruction from every possible quarter, and searching in their own souls. And this endeavour to discover the nature of their patron
253 god, by following the track in themselves, is attended with success, by reason of their being ever constrained to gaze upon their god unflinchingly; and when they grasp him with their memory, they are inspired with his inspiration, and take from him their character and habits, so far as it is possible for man to partake of god. And attributing these blessings to their beloved, they love him still more dearly than ever; and whatever streams they may have drawn from Zeus, like the inspired draughts of the Bacchanals, they pour into their darling's soul, thereby making him resemble, as far as possible, the god whom they resemble themselves. Those again who followed in the train of Hera, search out a youth of kingly mould, and when he is found,

act towards him in exactly the same manner as the former. And so it is with the adherents of Apollo, and all other gods. Walking themselves in the steps of their own proper god, they look for the youth whom they are to love to be of kindred nature; and when they have gained such an one, both by imitation on their own part, and by urging and attuning the soul of their beloved, they guide him into the particular pursuit and character of that god, so far as they are severally able, not treating him with jealous or illiberal harshness, but using every endeavour to bring him into all possible conformity with themselves and the god whom they adore. So beautiful is the desire of those who truly love; and if they accomplish their desire, so beautiful is the initiation, as I call it, into their holy mystery, and so fraught with blessing at the hand of the friend, whom love has maddened, to the object of the friendship, if he be but won. Now he who is won, is won in the following manner.

As at the commencement of this account I divided every soul into three parts, two of them resembling horses, and the third a charioteer, so let us here still keep to that division. Now of the horses one, if you remember, we said, was good, and the other bad; but wherein consists the goodness of the one, and the badness of the other, is a point which, not distinguished then, must be stated now. That horse of the two which occupies the nobler rank, is in form erect and firmly knit, high-

necked, hook-nosed, white-coloured, black-eyed; he loves honour with temperance and modesty, and, a votary of genuine glory, he is driven without stroke of the whip by voice and reason alone. The bad horse, on the other hand, is crooked, bulky, clumsily put together, with thick neck, short throat, flat face, black coat, gray and bloodshot eyes, a friend to all riot and insolence, shaggy about the ears, dull of hearing, scarce yielding to lash and goad united. Whenever therefore the driver sees the sight which inspires love, and his whole soul being thoroughly heated by sense, is surcharged with irritation and the stings of desire, the obedient horse, yielding then as ever to the
254 check of shame, restrains himself from springing on the loved one; but the other pays heed no longer to his driver's goad or lash, but struggles on with unruly bounds, and doing all violence to his yoke-fellow and master, forces them to approach the beautiful youth, and bethink themselves of the joys of dalliance. And though at first they resist him with indignation at the lawless and fearful crime he is urging, yet at last, when there is no end to the evil, they move onward as he leads them, having yielded him submission and agreed to do his bidding. So they come up to the beautiful boy, and see his face all gleaming with beauty. But at the sight the driver's memory is carried back to the essence of beauty, and again he sees her by the side of Continence standing on a holy pedestal. And

at the sight he shudders, and with a holy awe falls backward to the ground, and falling cannot help pulling back the reins so violently that he brings both the horses on their haunches, the one indeed willingly, because he is not resisting, but the rebel in spite of struggling. And when they are withdrawn to some distance, the former in his shame and ravishment drenches all the soul with sweat; but the other, when he is recovered from the pain which the bit and the fall inflicted, and has with difficulty regained his breath, breaks out into passionate revilings, vehemently railing at his master and his comrade for their treacherous cowardice in deserting their ranks and agreement. And again he urges them, again refusing, to approach, and barely yields a reluctant consent when they beg to defer the attempt to another time. But soon as the covenanted time is come, though they affect forgetfulness, he reminds them of their engagement, and plunging and neighing and dragging, he again obliges them to approach the beautiful youth to make the same proposals. And when they are near, he stoops his head and gets the bit between his teeth, and drags them on incontinently. But the driver experiences, though still more strongly, the same sensation as at first; backward he falls like racers at the barrier, and with a wrench still more violent than before pulls back the bit from between the teeth of the riotous horse, thereby drenching his jaws and railing tongue with blood:

and bruising against the ground his legs and haunches, consigns him to anguish. But as soon as by this treatment oft repeated the evil horse is recovered from his vice, he follows with humbled steps the guidance of his driver, and at sight of the fair one is consumed with terror. So that then, and not till then, does it happen that the soul of the lover follows his beloved with reverence and awe. And the
255 consequence is, that the youth being now worshipped with all the worship of a god by a lover who does not feign the passion, but feels it in his soul, and being himself by nature fondly inclined to his worshipper, even though haply in time past he may have been set against lovers by the remarks of his school-fellows or others on the scandal of allowing their approaches, and is therefore disposed to reject his present wooer, yet now that the latter is thus changed he is led in course of time, by the instinct of his years, and the law of destiny, to admit him to familiarity. For surely it was never destined for the bad to be friends of the bad, or the good aught but friendly to the good. But when the advances have been accepted and speech and intercourse allowed, the affection of the lover being brought into near connection with the loved one, strikes him with wonder, as it compels him to feel that the friendship shown him by all the rest of his friends and relations put together is as nothing beside the love of his god-inspired friend. And if he continues long thus to indulge him, and allows

him the closest contact both in gymnastic schools and other places of meeting, then it is that the stream of that effluence, to which Zeus when enamoured of Ganymedes gave the name of desire, pours upon the lover in a plenteous flood, and partly sinks within him, partly flows off him when he is full; and just as a wind or a noise rebounds from smooth and hard substances and is carried back again to the place from which it came; so the tide of beauty passes back into the beautiful boy through his eyes, the natural channel into his soul; and when it is come there and has fledged it anew, it waters the outlets of the feathers, and forcing them to shoot up afresh fills the soul of the loved one as well as that of his lover with love. He is in love therefore, but with whom he cannot say; nay, what it is that is come over him he knows not, neither can he tell, but like one who has caught a disease in the eye from the diseased gaze of another, he can assign no reason for the affection, but sees himself in his lover, as in a glass, without knowing who it is that he sees. And when they are together, he enjoys the same respite that his lover does from his anguish; but when they are parted, he yearns for him as he himself is yearned for, since he holds in his bosom love's reflected image, love returned. He calls it, however, and believes it to be not love but friendship, albeit, he feels the same desire as the other does, though in a feebler degree, for the sight, the touch, the kiss, the embrace. And con-

sequently, as might be expected, his conduct henceforward is as follows. When they are lying side by side, the lover's unbridled horse has much to say to its driver, and claims as
256 the recompense of many labours a short enjoyment; but the vicious horse of the other has nothing to say, but burning and restless clasps the lover and kisses him as he would kiss a dear friend, and when they are folded in each other's embrace, is just of such a temper as not for his part to refuse indulging the lover in any pleasure he might request to enjoy; but his yoke-fellow, on the other hand, joins the driver in struggling against him with chastity and reason. Should it appear then that the better part of their nature has succeeded in bringing both the lover and loved into a life of order and philosophy, and established its own ascendency, in bliss and harmony they live out their existence here, being masters of themselves and decorous before the world, having enslaved that portion of the soul wherein vice is contained, and liberated that where virtue dwells; and at last when they come to die, being winged and lightened, they have in one of their three truly Olympic combats achieved the prize, than which no greater good can either human prudence or godly madness bestow on man. But if they have given in to a coarser habit of life, and one unfriendly to wisdom, though not to honour, it may well happen that in a moment of drunkenness or like abandonment, those two unruly beasts will

surprise the souls off their guard, and bringing them together into one place will choose and consummate that practice which the world deems happy, and once consummated will for the future indulge in it, though sparingly, as doing what is not approved by all their mind. Dear, therefore, to each other, though not so dear as the former two, do these continue both while their love is burning and when it is extinct; for they conceive themselves to have given and received the strongest pledges, which it were impious at any time to violate by becoming alienated. And in the end, without their wings it is true, but not without having started feathers, they go forth from the body, so that they carry off no paltry prize for their impassioned madness; for there is a law that the paths of darkness beneath the earth shall never again be trodden by those who have so much as set their foot on the heaven-word road, but that walking hand in hand they shall live a bright and blessed life, and when they recover their wings, recover them together for their love's sake.

So great and so godly, my beautiful boy, are the blessings which the affection of a lover will bestow. But the commerce of one who does not love, being alloyed with mortal prudence, and dispensing only mortal and niggardly gifts, will breed in the soul of the loved one a 257
sordidness which the vulgar laud as virtue, and doom it for nine thousand years to be tossed about the earth and under the earth without reason.

Here, to thee, beloved Eros, fair and good as I can make it, I offer and duly pay a recantation, composed perforce for sake of Phædrus, both in phrase and other points, in a poetic strain. But oh vouchsafe me pardon for my former speech and indulgence for this, and of thy tender mercy neither take from me the art of love, which thou hast given me, nor cripple it in thy wrath, but grant that still more than ever I may find favour in the eyes of the fair. And, if in our former speech, Phædrus and I said aught offensive to thee, set it to the account of Lysias as the father of the speech, and make him to cease from speeches of this sort, and turn him to philosophy, even as his brother Polemarchus is turned, in order that his lover also here before thee may no longer halt, as now, between two opinions, but heart and soul devote his life to love with philosophic talk.

Ph. I join with you, Socrates, in praying that, if this lot be better for us, so it may befall us. With regard to the speech, however, it has been long exciting my admiration, so much more beautiful have you made it than your former one; so much more indeed that I am afraid I shall find Lysias making but a poor figure, if indeed he be willing to match it with another of his own. Which I have my doubts about. For it was only the other day that one of our public men in an attack he was making upon him, reproached him on this very score, and throughout his attack kept calling him a speech-writer. So that perhaps he may be led

by a care for his own reputation to desist from the practice.

Soc. Your notion is an absurd one, my young gentleman, and you are greatly mistaken in your favourite, if you imagine him to be a person so readily scared. Perhaps too you believe that his assailant meant what he said.

Ph. He certainly seemed to do so, Socrates; and besides, you must know as well as I do, that men of the greatest influence and consideration in a state are ashamed of writing speeches, and leaving behind them compositions of their own, for fear of obtaining with posterity the reputation and name of sophists.

Soc. It has escaped you, Phædrus, that the phrase 'A charming bend,' is derived from that long and wearisome bend in the Nile; and so it escapes you that under this affected dislike, our most self-satisfied statesmen are especially fond of composing speeches, and leaving behind them writings; so much so indeed, that whenever they write a speech, they conceive such an affection for its supporters, that they write down in an additional clause at its head the names of those who on each occasion accord it their approval.

Ph. How do you mean? I don't understand you.

Soc. Don't you understand that at the beginning of a statesman's writing the name of 258
its supporter is written first?

Ph. How so?

Soc. 'Approved.' Thus, if I am not mistaken, runs the writing: 'Approved by the

council, or people, or both.' And the proposer, our speech-writer to wit, naming his worthy self with all pomp and panegyric, proceeds to make a speech, and to show off his wisdom to his supporters, not unfrequently by the composition of a very long writing. Or, do you conceive such a production as this to be something different from a written speech?

Ph. No, certainly I don't.

Soc. Well, if the speech stands, our poet goes home from his theatre rejoicing; but if it be erased, and he debarred from speech-writing, and the dignity of authorship, he goes into mourning, himself and his friends.

Ph. So they do.

Soc. Obviously not as disdaining the practice, but as viewing it with admiration.

Ph. Precisely.

Soc. Again, whenever an orator or a monarch has been found equal to the task of assuming the authority of a Lycurgus, or a Solon, or a Darius, and becoming a speech-writer for immortality in a state, does not both he himself, during his lifetime, look upon himself in the light of a god, and do not after ages conceive the same opinion of him, from a survey of his written works?

Ph. To be sure they do.

Soc. Do you believe then that a person of this sort, however strong his antipathy to Lysias, would attack him simply on the score of being a writer?

Ph. It is not at any rate to be expected that

he would from what you say; for in so doing he would to all appearance be attacking his own particular fancy.

Soc. It must then, I think, be universally acknowledged, that there is no disgrace in the mere fact of writing speeches.

Ph. How can there be?

Soc. But the disgrace, I imagine, commences when they are composed not well, but awkwardly and ill.

Ph. Obviously.

Soc. What then is the character of good and bad writing? Ought we, think you, Phædrus, to take on this matter the evidence of Lysias, and of every one else who has either written or means to write a work, political or otherwise, either in metre as a poet, or without metre as a prose-writer?

Ph. Do you ask if we ought? Why what other object can a man be said to live for, than the enjoyment of such pleasures as these? Surely not for those which must be preceded by pain, before they can be so much as enjoyed, which is the case you know with most of our bodily pleasures, so that they have been justly denominated servile.

Soc. Well, we have time it seems to spare; and moreover I cannot help fancying that the cicalas, while chirping and talking together over our heads, as is their wont in the heat of the day, have their eyes upon you and me. Should 259
they see us then, like common men, falling asleep instead of conversing in the middle of

the day, and abandoning ourselves in laziness of soul to their lulling music, they would regard us with merited scorn, and fancy themselves looking upon some poor slaves, who had sought the refuge of their retreat, to take like sheep a mid-day nap by the waters of their well. But if they see us proceeding with our conversation, and sailing past them unenchanted by their siren strains, they may perhaps in their admiration confer on us that boon, which they have from the gods to bestow upon men.

Ph. What boon is that? I do not remember to have heard of it.

Soc. A lover of the Muses is the last person who should be ignorant of such matters as this. The story goes, that once upon a time these cicalas were men, of a race that lived before the birth of the Muses. But when the Muses were born, and song appeared, it came to pass that some of that race were so transported with pleasure, that as they sang they forgot to eat and drink, till death came upon them unawares. From them it is that the race of the cicalas are sprung, having received the boon from the Muses, that they should need no nourishment after they were come into the world, but spend their time in singing, without food or drink, from the moment of their birth to the day of their death, when they are to repair to the Muses, and tell each of them of their worshippers here below. Terpsichore they tell of those who have honoured her in the dance, and thus make them dearer to her than before:

Erato they tell of her votaries in love, and so to each of the other sisters they make their report according to the character of her proper worship. But to Calliope the eldest, and Urania the second of the nine, they bear tidings of those who pass their lives in philosophic study and observance of their peculiar music, these we know being the Muses who, having heaven for their special sphere, and words both divine and human, pour forth the gladdest strains. You see therefore, Phædrus, there are many reasons why we should talk and not slumber in the middle of the day.

Ph. Indeed there are.

Soc. Let us then, resuming the subject which we proposed to ourselves for consideration, examine in what consists a good or a bad discourse, whether spoken or written.

Ph. Certainly.

Soc. Is it not an essential condition of a good and fine speech being made, that the mind of the speaker be acquainted with the truth of the matter he is going to discuss?

Ph. Why, I have heard men say on this subject, Socrates, that there is no need at all for the intended orator to learn what is really 260
just, but only what is likely to be considered just by the multitude who are to sit as judges; nor, again, what is really good and honourable, but only what will appear so; for by such appearances, they add, is persuasion effected, and not by truth.

Soc. Sure we must not cast away a saying,

Phædrus, which wise men have uttered, but rather examine whether there be anything in it or not. And so we must not refuse a hearing to your present remark.

Ph. Certainly not.

Soc. Let us consider it then in the following point of view. Suppose I were to set about persuading you to buy a horse for the purposes of war, but neither of us knew what a horse was; only this much I did happen to know, that my friend Phædrus believed a horse to be that domestic animal which has the longest ears.

Ph. Why, it would be absurd, Socrates.

Soc. Wait a moment. What if I were to proceed in a tone of serious persuasion, and compose a panegyric on the ass, all the while calling him a horse, and saying that he was a creature of infinite value, not only for domestic purposes, but also on military service, as he was both convenient to fight from, and capable of bringing up baggage, and of being made useful in a thousand other ways?

Ph. Well, there can be no doubt of its being utterly absurd now, at any rate.

Soc. Is it not better though to be absurd, than a dangerous and malevolent friend?

Ph. Doubtless it is.

Soc. Whenever then an orator, who is ignorant of good and evil, finds a people in a state of similar ignorance, and takes upon himself to persuade them by passing an eulogium, not upon a poor ass as though it were a horse, but upon evil as though it were good; and when,

by having studied and learned the popular opinions, he has succeeded in persuading them to do that which is evil instead of that which is good, what kind of fruit do you imagine his oratory will hereafter reap as the harvest of the seed she has sown?

Ph. No very good one, certainly.

Soc. Is it not possible though, my good Phædrus, that we have been somewhat too rough in our attack on rhetoric? may she not turn upon us and say, What's all this trifling, ye wondrous wise? I force no man to learn speaking without a knowledge of the truth; on the contrary, if my advice be worth anything, he will acquire the truth before he comes to me. But what I do insist on is this, that without my aid he will not be a whit the better able, for all his knowledge of truth, to persuade according to art.

Ph. And do not you admit the justice of her plea?

Soc. I do, provided only the arguments which are coming up to attack her testify to her being an art. For methinks I hear the rustle of certain arguments approaching, and protesting that she is an impostor, and no art at all, but an inartistic knack. But of speaking, says the Spartan, there neither is, nor ever shall be, genuine art without the grasp of truth.

Ph. We must have your arguments, Socrates; bring them here into court, and examine what 261
it is they say, and how they say it.

Soc. Hither then, fine creatures, and persuade

Phædrus, father of a fair progeny like you, that if he be not a competent philosopher, neither at any time will he be a competent speaker on any subject at all. And let Phædrus reply.

Ph. Put your questions.

Soc. May not rhetoric in general be considered as a method of winning men's souls by means of words, not only in courts of law, and other public assemblies, but also in private conversation indifferently on matters great and small; and is not its correct use held in equal honour whether the subject to which it is applied be trivial or important? Or what have you heard say on the matter?

Ph. Why nothing at all of this kind, I can assure you. No, the courts of law are the especial sphere of rhetorical art, and it is also employed in addressing deliberative assemblies; but I never heard of its extending further.

Soc. What, have you only heard of the arts of speaking composed by Nestor and Ulysses, to while away their leisure before Troy? and have you never heard of those by Palamedes?

Ph. No, nor of Nestor's either, unless you are making a Nestor of Gorgias, and a Ulysses of Thrasymachus or Theodorus.

Soc. Possibly I am. However, to leave these gentlemen for the present, answer me this. In a court of justice, what is it that the contending parties do? Contradict each other, do they not?

Ph. Precisely.

Soc. On points of right and wrong?

Ph. Yes.

Soc. And if a man does this by rule of art, he will make the same thing appear to the same people to be at one time right, and at another, if he pleases, wrong.

Ph. Of course.

Soc. And so in a popular harangue he will make the public believe the same line of conduct to be at one time for their advantage, and at another time just the reverse.

Ph. Certainly he will.

Soc. But do we not also hear of the Eleatic Palamedes speaking by aid of art in such a manner that his hearers believed the same things to be at once like and unlike, one and many, at rest and in motion?

Ph. Undoubtedly we do.

Soc. It appears, then, that the art of debate is not confined either to courts of law or popular assemblies, but that to everything that is said we are able to apply this single art, if art it is, by which we shall be enabled to make all things appear similar that are capable of so appearing, and to drag to the light all such attempts in others, however dexterously concealed.

Ph. I don't quite understand what you mean by this.

Soc. My meaning will, I think, be apparent, if we conduct our inquiry thus. Is deception more generally practised in things which differ 262
much or little?

Ph. In those which differ little.

Soc. And you will get round, I conceive,

from one side to the other, with less chance of detection, by taking short steps than long ones.

Ph. Unquestionably.

Soc. If one man, then, would fain deceive another, without being deceived himself, he ought to be able to discriminate accurately the resemblances and differences of things.

Ph. Nay, he *must* be able.

Soc. But if he be ignorant of the true nature of a particular thing, will he be in a condition to distinguish between a greater and less resemblance to it in other things?

Ph. Impossible.

Soc. Whenever, therefore, people are deceived, and form opinions wide of the truth, it is clear that the error has slid into their minds through the medium of certain resemblances to that truth.

Ph. Such no doubt is generally the case.

Soc. Is it possible, then, for a man ever to possess the art of bringing over the mind of another from truth to falsehood, by leading it from link to link in the chain of resemblances, or to escape such delusion himself, without having first arrived at an understanding of the true nature of each particular thing?

Ph. No, never.

Soc. An art of speaking then, composed by one, who, without a knowledge of the truth, has entrapped men's opinions, will present, I conceive, but a sorry and inartistic appearance.

Ph. I apprehend so.

Soc. Now, Phædrus, what say you to our

taking the speech of Lysias, which you have got in your hand, together with those of mine which followed, and looking for instances in them of what we maintain to be in accordance with, or in violation of, art?

Ph. I should like it of all things; since there is a sort of baldness in our present way of treating the subject, arising from a want of proper examples.

Soc. True, and by some lucky chance, as I take it, both the speeches were made to afford an example of the manner in which an author, who is himself acquainted with the truth, may for mere amusement lead his hearers away from it in discourse. And for my part, Phædrus, I set this to the account of the deities of the spot; or it may be that the ministers of the Muses, our songsters overhead, have breathed into us this happy gift. For sure I am that I at least am innocent of any art of speaking.

Ph. Be it as you will — only make your meaning clear.

Soc. Well, then, read me out the beginning of Lysias's speech.

Ph. With the state of my affairs you are acquainted, and how I expect advantage to us both from this arrangement you have heard. Now I claim not to be disappointed in my suit on the ground of my not happening to be your lover. For lovers repent.

Soc. Stop—we are to notice, are we not, any error or violation of art that our author commits? 263

Ph. We are.

Soc. Well, then, is it not obvious to all the world, that on certain points of this kind we are all agreed, on others all at variance?

Ph. I think I know what you mean; but explain yourself more clearly.

Soc. When a man uses the words iron or silver, do we not all understand by them the same things?

Ph. To be sure we do.

Soc. But what happens when he talks of justice or virtue? Do we not all start off at once in different directions, and quarrel both with one another and ourselves?

Ph. Too true.

Soc. On some things, then, you allow we are agreed, in others not?

Ph. Just so.

Soc. Now in which of these two classes of things is deception more easily practised; and in which has rhetoric greater power?

Ph. Clearly in that in which we are liable to go wrong.

Soc. Before handling, then, an art of rhetoric, a man ought in the first instance to have methodically distinguished between these two classes, and discovered some characteristic mark of each, of that in which men in general are of necessity in error, and of that where no such necessity exists.

Ph. A fine generalisation certainly, Socrates, would he have devised who had seized on this distinction.

Soc. And secondly, I imagine, when he comes to any particular case, he must not be

at fault, but perceive with rapidity in which of the two classes the subject of his intended remarks is contained.

Ph. Exactly.

Soc. Now what do you say to Love? Are we to rank him in the debatable, or certain class?

Ph. In the debatable, without a doubt. For how else do you think he would have allowed you to say all that you have just now said about him, making him out at one time to be a curse both to the lover and his favourite; and then again their chiefest blessing?

Soc. Admirably said: but tell me this too—for I, you must know, was in such an ecstatic state, that I do not quite remember—did I give a definition of Love at the beginning of my speech?

Ph. Ay, that you did, and a wonderfully thorough one too.

Soc. Alas for Lysias, son of Cephalus! How far less skilled do you make him in the art of speech-writing than the nymphs of our river and Pan the son of Hermes; or am I altogether wrong, and did Lysias also, at the commencement of his love-speech, compel us to form some one definite conception of love—the conception that he himself preferred—and then proceed, in strict accordance with this conception, to arrange all the subsequent parts of his discourse till he brought it to a fitting conclusion? Just let us read the opening sentence again.

Ph. I will if you wish it, though what you are looking for is not there.

Soc. Let us hear it, that we may take his own evidence on the point.

Ph. 'With the state of my affairs you are acquainted, and that I expect advantage to us
264 both from this arrangement, you have heard. Now I claim not to be disappointed in my suit on the ground of my not belonging to the number of your lovers; for they, indeed, repent of the benefits they have conferred as soon as they are released from their passion.'

Soc. Yes, we seem to be far indeed from discovering here what we are looking for, when we find our author not even starting from the beginning, but from the end of his subject, and essaying to get through his discourse like a swimmer on his back—the wrong way foremost; for you see he commences with what the lover might be supposed to say to his favourite at the end, and not before the end, of his address. Or do you see nothing in my objection, Phædrus, noble friend?

Ph. Yes, I must confess, Socrates, that what he is talking about is a natural conclusion of the subject.

Soc. And what do you say to the rest? Do not the several parts of his discourse appear to have been thrown together at random? or do you see some necessity for the second sentence occupying the second place, or any other sentence appearing in the position he has assigned it? For my part, I must confess that he seems to me, in my ignorance, to have put down on paper, with a gentlemanly independence, what-

ever came first into his head; but you, perhaps, are aware of some law of composition which guided his sentences into that particular order.

Ph. You are too good to suppose me capable of seeing through the design of a Lysias with so critical an eye.

Soc. But this I think you will allow, that every speech ought to be put together like a living creature, with a body of its own, lacking neither head nor foot, but having both a middle and extremities in perfect keeping with one another and the whole.

Ph. Undoubtedly.

Soc. Examine, then, whether your friend's speech be composed on this principle or not, and you will find it just like the epigram which people say is inscribed on the tomb of Midas, the Phrygian.

Ph. What is the epigram, and what is there peculiar about it?

Soc. It runs thus:

I am a maiden of brass, and I lie upon Midas's tomb:
Ever while water shall flow, and the trees of the forest shall bloom,
Here will I stay on a grave that is watered with many a tear,
Telling to all who pass by me that Midas is sepulchred here.

Now, that it is utterly immaterial whether any line of this epigram be put first or last, you must, I should think, have observed.

Ph. You make very merry with our speech, Socrates.

Soc. Well, Phædrus, to spare your feelings, suppose we pass it by; not but that I conceive it to contain a crowd of examples, which a man might study with advantage to himself, provided only he does not at all attempt to imitate them; and let us proceed to the other two speeches, for there was something in them, I
265 imagine, well worthy the attention of those who wish to consider the subject of speaking.

Ph. What sort of thing do you mean?

Soc. If I remember right, they were opposed to each other; the one supporting the claims of the impassioned; and the other, those of the unimpassioned suitor.

Ph. And right manfully they did their work.

Soc. I thought you were going to say, as the truth would warrant, right madly. However, this is the very point I was in quest of. We said that love was a madness, did we not?

Ph. We did.

Soc. And that madness was of two kinds, the one produced by human disease, the other by an inspired departure from established usages.

Ph. Exactly.

Soc. And the inspired we divided into four parts, and distributing them among four heavenly powers, we set down the madness of prophecy to the inspiration of Apollo; of mysteries, to the inspiration of Dionysus; to the Muses again we ascribed the madness of poesy; and the fourth, to Aphrodite and Eros. And this last, the madness of love, we said was the best

of all the four; and expressing the affection of love by a strange kind of similitude, wherein we kept, I doubt not, some true principle in our sight, though haply we swerved into error on our path, we compounded a discourse not altogether without plausibility, and sang a mythic hymn in seemly and pious adoration of my lord and thine, Phædrus — of Eros, the patron of beautiful boys.

Ph. And one, I can assure you, which it afforded me no slight pleasure to hear.

Soc. Let us now, by an examination of the speech itself, discover how it was that it found means of passing from censure to praise.

Ph. Well, and how was it?

Soc. You must know that I consider the speech itself, in its general character, to be nothing more than a sportive effusion; but throughout all that was thus casually uttered, there are two forms of method apparent which would well repay our attention, if we could but obtain a systematic view of their respective efficiency.

Ph. What are they, pray?

Soc. The first consists in comprehending at a glance, whenever a subject is proposed, all the widely scattered particulars connected with it, and bringing them together under one general idea, in order that, by a precise definition, we may make every one understand what it is that at the time we are intending to discuss. And this plan we just now, as you remember, adopted with regard to love: we defined its nature;

and whatever be the merit of the performance, certain it is that to that definition my speech owes its clearness and consistency.

Ph. And what is your other method, Socrates?

Soc. That, on the other hand, enables us to separate a general idea into its subordinate elements, by dividing it at the joints, as nature directs, and not attempting to break any limb in half, after the fashion of a bungling carver. And this plan was followed in my two speeches with regard to mental derangement. Just as
266 from one body there proceed two sets of members, called by the same name, but distinguished as right and left, so when my speeches had formed the general conception of mental derangement, as constituting by nature one class within us, the speech which had to divide the left-hand portion desisted not from dividing it into smaller, and again smaller parts, till it found among them a kind of left-handed love, which it railed at with well-deserved severity; while the other led us to the right-hand side of madness, where it discovered a love bearing indeed the same name as the former, but of an opposite and a godly sort, which it held up to be gazed at and lauded as the author of our greatest blessings.

Ph. Perfectly true.

Soc. Now, not only do I pursue myself, with all a lover's assiduity, these methods of decomposing and combining, but if ever I find any one else whom I judge capable of apprehending

the one and the many as they are in nature, that man 'I follow behind, as though in the track of a god.' And to all who are possessed of this power I have been in the habit of giving, whether rightly or wrongly, heaven knows, the name of dialecticians. But tell me, what is the proper name for the disciples of your school and Lysias's? is yours that identical art of words by the use of which Thrasymachus and his compeers have not only become clever speakers themselves, but make such of all their pupils, who are willing to bring them presents, as though they were kings?

Ph. And men of kingly mould they are, though certainly not acquainted with that about which you are now inquiring. However, you appear to me to be quite right in calling this kind of method dialectical; but the rhetorical, I take it, still eludes our grasp.

Soc. Indeed! a fine thing truly that must be which, not comprised in this, is yet apprehended by art. On no account must it be slighted by you and me—come now, let us consider what it is that is left to rhetoric.

Ph. Oh, you'll find plenty of it, I doubt not, Socrates, if you'll only look in the books written on the art of speech-making.

Soc. True, and I am obliged to you for reminding me. We must have, in the first place, I think, an exordium delivered at the opening of the speech. This is what you mean—is it not? the refinements of the art?

Ph. Yes.

Soc. And next we must have narration, they say, and evidence to back it, and thirdly proofs, and fourthly probabilities; and there's confirmation, if I remember right, and after-confirmation to boot, according to that prime tricker-out of speeches who comes from Byzantium.

Ph. Worthy Theodorus, eh?

Soc. Exactly. He gives us rules too for
267 refutation and after-refutation, both in charge and defence. But the Parian wonder, Evenus, we must not leave in the background, who was the first to discover sub-intimation and by-panegyric; nay, they tell me he repeats his by-censures in verse, to aid the memory. So clever is he. Can we pass over in silence either Tisias and Gorgias, who were enabled to see that the probable ought to be more highly prized than the true; who make small things appear great, and great things small, by force of words; who talk of what is new as though it were old, and of what is old as though it were new; and who have invented for every subject a terse brevity and illimitable prolixity? Once though, when I told Prodicus of this, he burst out a-laughing, and said that none but himself had discovered what kind of speeches were required by art. We must have them, says he, neither long nor short, but of moderate length.

Ph. Cleverly said, Prodicus.

Soc. But we must not forget Hippias; for I fancy our friend from Elis would be on the same side with him of Ceos.

Ph. Doubtless.

Soc. But where shall we find words for all Polus's museum of ornaments—his jingle-making, maxim-making, image-making, and all the pretty expressions which he borrowed from his master Licymnius, to create a harmonious diction?

Ph. Was not this though, Socrates, something in the style of Protagoras?

Soc. A correctness of diction, young sir, was what he taught, and a great many other fine things too. But in the art of dragging in piteous whinings on poverty and age, there never was, I believe, such a master as the hero of Chalcedon. He was a terrible man, too, for rousing the passions of a crowd, and lulling them again when roused, by the magic of his song, as he used to say; and at raising or rebutting a calumny on any ground whatsoever, he was eminently expert. To come, however, to the conclusion of the speech, that is, I imagine, a point on which all men are agreed, though some call it recapitulation, and others by some different title.

Ph. You mean, the summarily reminding the hearers at the end of the speech of all that has been said in the course of it.

Soc. Yes; and now have you anything else to tell me about the art of speaking?

Ph. Only a few trifling matters not worth mentioning.

Soc. Well, if they are trifling, let us pass them by, and rather hold up these we have got 268

to the light, that we may discern the character and sphere of their efficiency in art.

Ph. There is no doubt of its being a very powerful one, Socrates; in popular assemblies, at any rate.

Soc. None, I am aware; but look at them, my good sir, and see whether you do not observe, as I do, some flaw in their texture.

Ph. Point it out, will you?

Soc. Well, answer me this. Suppose a man were to call upon your friend Eryximachus, or his father Acumenus, and say, I know how to make such applications to the body as will create either heat or cold, as I please; and if I think proper, I can produce vomitings and purgings, and a great variety of similar effects. And, on the strength of this knowledge, I flatter myself that I am a physician, and able to make a physician of any one to whom I may communicate the knowledge of these matters. What do you think would be their answer on hearing this?

Ph. Why, they would, of course, ask him whether he also knew to what objects, at what times, and to what extent, these modes of treatment ought severally to be applied.

Soc. And if he were to answer, Oh, I know nothing of the kind; but I expect that my pupil will be able to act in all these matters for himself, as soon as he has learnt the secrets I mentioned.

Ph. Why then they would doubtless say, The man is mad; he has been hearing some

book read, or he has fallen in with some nostrum or other, and fancies himself in consequence a made physician, while in reality he knows nothing at all about the art.

Soc. And what if a man were to go up to Sophocles and Euripides, and tell them that he knew how to make a very long harangue on a small matter, and again, a very short harangue on a great matter; that he could write at will in a pathetic or in a bold and menacing tone; that he possessed a variety of similar accomplishments, and that by giving lessons in such he conceived himself to be imparting the power of writing tragedy?

Ph. Well, they too, I imagine, Socrates, would burst into a laugh at the notion of tragedy being made up of these elements, without regard being paid to their consistency with one another and the whole in the combination.

Soc. True, but they would not, I conceive, rail at him coarsely, but would rather adopt the tone a musician would use on meeting with a man who esteemed himself a harmonist, because, as he said, he happened to know how to draw from a chord the highest and lowest possible notes. For the musician, I imagine, would not fiercely say to such a person, You wretched fellow, you are stark mad: but, with the gentleness that music inspires, would reply, It is doubtless necessary, my excellent friend, for these matters to be understood by the intended harmonist, but there is nothing in the world to

hinder a person who knows all that you know from being altogether ignorant of harmony: for the acquirements which you possess are the necessary preliminaries to harmony, and not harmony itself.

Ph. And a very proper answer, too.

Soc. And in like manner, Sophocles might
269 reply to the tragic pretender, that he knew the preliminaries to tragedy, but not tragedy itself; and Acumenus to the medical pretender, that he knew the preliminaries to medicine, but not medicine itself.

Ph. Most assuredly they might.

Soc. And lastly, what answer might we expect from the honied tones of our Athenian Adrastus, or from the great Pericles himself, were they to hear of the splendid devices which we have just now enumerated, of the maxim-makings, image-makings, and all the other makings, of which we concluded the list by remarking, that they deserved to be scrutinised in a clearer light? Would they follow, do you imagine, our rude example, and be so boorish as to give vent to ill-mannered expressions against those who have written on, and give lessons in these artifices, as though they constituted the art of rhetoric: or would they, as being wiser than we, turn upon us reprovingly, and say, Phædrus and Socrates, you do not well to be angry, but should rather make all allowance, if people ignorant of dialectics have been found unable to define what rhetoric is, and, as the natural result of this ignorance, have conceived them-

selves inventors of an art of rhetoric because they happen to possess the acquirements which must of necessity precede the art; and if, again, they believe that by teaching these acquirements to others they have imparted to them rhetoric in perfection, while they say nothing about the power of using each of them persuasively, or of combining them into one general whole, but leave it, as a trifling matter, to the pupils themselves, to furnish, out of their own unaided resources, in the speeches they may have to compose.

Ph. Well, certainly, Socrates, I am afraid that such is very much the character of the art which these people teach both in lecture and writing; and I must confess I think you have spoken the truth. But do now tell me by what means, and from what source, we may acquire the real art of rhetorical persuasion.

Soc. The power, Phædrus, of becoming a consummate workman therein, is probably, or I should rather say, is of necessity, subject to a universal law. If you are endowed by nature with a genius for speaking, you will be a distinguished speaker, if you add thereto science and practice; but in whichever of these three requisites you are wanting, you will by so much fall short of perfection. However, for all of it that is art, the true method will not, I think, be found on the road whereon Tisias and Thrasymachus are travelling.

Ph. On what road then?

Soc. Pericles would seem, my good friend,

not without reason, to have become the most perfect orator that ever lived.

Ph. How so?

Soc. All the higher arts require, over and above their immediate discipline, a subtle and speculative acquaintance with physical science; it being, I imagine, by some such door as this
270 that there enters that elevation of thought and universal mastery over the subject in hand. Now Pericles added these advantages to that of great natural genius. For he fell into the hands, if I mistake not, of Anaxagoras, a teacher of such studies, and being by him stored with abstruse speculation, and led to penetrate into the nature of the intelligent and unintelligent principle—subjects which occupied, you are aware, the main place in his master's discourse—he draughted from those researches into the art of speaking the investigations suitable for it.

Ph. How do you mean?

Soc. The case, I imagine, is the same with the art of rhetoric as it is with that of medicine.

Ph. In what way?

Soc. In both it is necessary to investigate nature; the nature of the body in the one, and of the soul in the other, if you intend to follow a scientific principle, and not a mere empirical routine, in the application of such medicine and diet to the former as will produce in it health and strength, and of such words and rightful culture to the latter as will impart to it the desired persuasion and virtue.

Ph. This seems reasonable at any rate, Socrates.

Soc. Now, do you conceive it possible to comprehend satisfactorily the nature of the soul without comprehending the nature of the universe?

Ph. Why, if credit is to be given to Hippocrates, of the line of Æsculapius, the nature of the body even cannot be comprehended without this investigation.

Soc. He says well, Phædrus. However, we must not be content with the evidence of Hippocrates, but, interrogating the argument itself, observe if it be consistent.

Ph. True.

Soc. Observe, then, with regard to nature what is maintained by Hippocrates and the truth. Is it not thus that they bid us examine into a thing's nature? In the first place, we are to inquire whether that is simple or manifold in which we wish to be scientifically proficient ourselves, and able to render others such also: secondly, if it be simple, we are to examine what power it possesses by nature of acting, and of acting upon what, or what susceptibility of being acted upon, and what it is that acts upon it; if it comprise a number of kinds, we are to enumerate these kinds, and observe with regard to each of them, as in the simple case, its properties, whether active or passive.

Ph. Yes, this seems to be the way, Socrates.

Soc. At any rate, the method which neglected these investigations would be no better

than a blind man's walk. But surely we must never compare the scientific follower of any pursuit to a blind or a deaf man. No; it is evident that whosoever teaches speaking on scientific principles, will accurately explain the essential nature of that to which his pupil will have to address his speeches. And this, if I mistake not, will be the soul.

Ph. Indisputably.

Soc. Against this then all his battle is directed;
271 for in this it is that he endeavours to effect persuasion. Is it not so?

Ph. Yes.

Soc. It is obvious, therefore, that Thrasymachus and every one else who seriously communicates an art of rhetoric, will, in the first place, with all accuracy notice and make apparent whether the soul be single and uniform by nature, or, like the body, of many different kinds—this being the process which we maintain to be revealing a nature.

Ph. Precisely.

Soc. Secondly, he will explain in what part it is active, and upon what it acts; in what part passive, and by what it is acted upon.

Ph. To be sure he will.

Soc. And thirdly, when he has ranged in order the different kinds of speech and different kinds of soul, and their different conditions, he will enumerate all causes that act, and suiting kind by kind, will show what sort of soul is of necessity persuaded, or not persuaded, by what sort of speech, and for what reason, in either case.

Ph. At any rate, his work would to all appearance be best done by this method.

Soc. Never, I can assure you, my friend, will aught spoken or explained on a different method be spoken or explained on a scientific method, either in this case or any other. But our modern authors, whom you wot of, of arts of rhetoric, are crafty dissemblers, and manage to keep out of view their exquisite insight into the nature of the soul. Till, then, they both speak and write in this manner, let us not accord to them that they speak and write scientifically.

Ph. What manner do you mean by *this?*

Soc. To dictate the exact forms of expression were no easy task; but the general course that a speaker ought to pursue, if he means to perform his work as scientifically as possible, I am prepared to explain.

Ph. Do so.

Soc. It being admitted that the efficacy of speech is to win men's souls, it follows of necessity that the intended speaker must be acquainted with all kinds of soul that exist. Now of these kinds there are a certain number, each being of a certain sort; whence result different characters in different individuals. And this division being established, there are again a certain number of kinds of speeches, each of a certain character. Persons, therefore, of a certain character are by speeches of a certain character easily persuaded for certain reasons into certain things, while persons of a different

character are under the same circumstances hard to be persuaded. These distinctions, then, must be competently understood; but even when understood, our speaker must be able to follow them rapidly with his perceptive faculties, as they fall under his notice in the course and operation of daily life, or as yet he knows no more of his art than the mere speeches he used to hear from his master at school. But when he is in a condition to say what sort of man is likely to be persuaded by what sort of speech, and on meeting with an individual in the world, is able to read his character at a
272 glance, and say to himself, Here is the man, and here the nature, for which I heard those speeches from my master, now actually present before me; him, therefore, I must address with this sort of speech, in this sort of manner, if I mean to persuade him to this sort of thing—when, I say, he is possessed of all this knowledge, and has learnt, moreover, the proper time for speaking, and the proper time for being silent, and has further learnt to distinguish between the seasonable and unseasonable use of the style sententious, the style pathetic, the style indignant, and all your other styles of speaking in which he has been instructed, then, I maintain, and not till then, is his art wrought into a beautiful and a perfect work. But if he omit any of these requisites, whether in writing, or teaching, or speaking, while he professes to be performing his work scientifically, the hearer who refuses to be

persuaded achieves a victory over him. But, Phædrus, but, Socrates — we shall doubtless hear from our friend the treatise-writer—is this to be your sole art of speaking, or may we put up with one conducted on somewhat different principles?

Ph. None other, I take it, Socrates, can possibly be allowed, and yet this of yours appears no slight undertaking.

Soc. True, Phædrus, it is not slight. And for this reason we ought to turn over all their writings again and again, to see whether there be found anywhere an easier and a briefer road to the art, in order that we may not uselessly travel on a long and rough one when we might go by one both smooth and short. So if you have ever heard of anything available for our purpose, either from Lysias, or any other teacher, make an effort to remember and tell it me.

Ph. If the effort were sufficient, Socrates, I should be able to do so; as it is, I can remember nothing at the moment.

Soc. What say you then to my repeating a statement which I have heard from certain gentlemen who handle the subject?

Ph. I should like it of all things.

Soc. Well, the saying is, you know, Phædrus, that it's fair to state even the wolf's cause.

Ph. It is, and do you comply with it.

Soc. I will. They tell me there is no need in the world to treat the matter so solemnly, or to carry it back to so remote a source, by such

long meanderings. For there is not the slightest occasion — this we also mentioned at the beginning of our argument—for people, intending to be competent speakers, to have anything at all to do with the truth, about actions just or good, or about men who are such either by nature or education. For in courts of justice, they say, no one troubles himself in the least degree with the truth of these matters, but only with what is plausible, that is to say, with what is likely; to this, therefore, you must give all your attention if you mean to speak by rule of art. Nay, there are occasions when you must not even state facts as they have actually happened, if the story be improbable, but only such as are likely, whether in accusation or defence. And, in short, in whatever you say, it is the probable that you must chiefly aim at,
273 and pay no regard at all to the true. For the observance of this, throughout your speech, will supply you with the entire art.

Ph. Yes, Socrates, this is exactly the language employed by our professed masters in the art of speaking. I remember, that in the early part of our conversation, we did slightly touch upon this sort of principle, and that this is held to be of paramount importance by the gentlemen of the profession.

Soc. Nay, Phædrus, I'm sure you have read over and over again the great Tisias himself. So let Tisias tell us in person whether he means anything else by the probable, than what accords with the opinion of the many.

Ph. What else can I? answers Tisias.

Soc. On the strength then, I suppose, of this sapient and scientific discovery, he proceeds to announce, that if a weak, but courageous man, is brought to trial for having knocked down and robbed of his clothes, or purse, a strong and cowardly one, neither accuser nor accused is to tell the truth to the judges, but the coward is to say that the other had assistance when he knocked him down; while the brave man must first prove the fact of their being alone, and then appealing to their favourite probable, exclaim, Why, how could a man like myself have ever thought of attacking a man like that? But the other, you may be sure, is not to plead his own cowardice, but rather essay some fresh falsehood, which will, perhaps, supply his adversary with the means of refuting the accusation. And so, whatever be the matter on hand, this, he says, is the style of pleading warranted by art. Is it not so, Phædrus?

Ph. It is.

Soc. Recondite truly is the art, and wonderful the skill of its inventor, be he Tisias, or who he may, and whatever be the name he delights to be called by. But, Phædrus, shall we answer him or not?

Ph. With what?

Soc. With this. Long before you joined our conversation, Tisias, we chanced to observe, that this vaunted probability of yours only made itself felt in the minds of the many, by virtue of its resemblance to the truth. And we have

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since proved, that in all cases the various shades of resemblance are best detected by the man who is best acquainted with the truth in question. So that, if you have anything else to say on the art of speaking, we shall be delighted to hear it; if not, we will abide by our previous position, that unless a speaker has reckoned up the different natures of his hearers, and is able both to separate things into their several kinds, and embrace particulars under one general idea, he will never reach that highest point of excellence in the art which is attainable by the power of man. But this knowledge he can never possibly acquire without great labour; labour which the wise man ought to bestow, not with a view to speaking and acting before the world, but for the sake of making himself able, both by word and deed to please the gods as best
274 he can. For verily, Tisias, so speak wiser men than you or I, it behoves not the reasonable man to study pleasing fellow-bondsmen, save only if he may in passing, but masters good, and of good descent. If, therefore, our circuit be a long one, marvel not; for it is for the sake of high ends that we have to make it, and not for such as you conceive. Still, even yours, as our argument proves, may be best attained, if you choose to derive them from our source.

Ph. The ends you speak of, Socrates, are very glorious, I know, if a man could but attain to them.

Soc. But surely, my friend, if the ends be glorious, all that befalls us in seeking them is glorious also.

Ph. Indeed it is.

Soc. So far, then, as regards the scientific and unscientific treatment of discourse: let this suffice.

Ph. And well it may.

Soc. But the question of propriety and impropriety in writing, and how to make a composition graceful or inelegant, remains to be considered. Does it not?

Ph. Yes.

Soc. Are you aware, Phædrus, by what conduct or language, with respect to speaking, a man will please God best?

Ph. Not at all;—are you?

Soc. At any rate I can tell you a story of the ancients on the subject. Whether it be true or not, they know themselves; but if haply *we* could find the truth, could we possibly, think you, pay heed any longer to the opinions of men?

Ph. That would be indeed ridiculous; but pray tell me the story you say you have heard.

Soc. Well, I heard that in the neighbourhood of Naucratis, in Egypt, there lived one of the ancient gods of that country; the same to whom that holy bird is consecrated which they call, as you know, Ibis, and whose own name was Theuth. He, they proceed, was the first to invent numbers and arithmetic, and geometry and astronomy; draughts moreover, and dice, and, above all, letters. Now the whole of Egypt was at that time under the sway of the god Thamus, who resided

near the capital city of the upper region, which the Greeks call Egyptian Thebes. The god himself they call Ammon. To him, therefore, Theuth repaired; and, displaying his inventions, recommended their general diffusion among the Egyptians. The king asked him the use of each, and received his explanations, as he thought them good or bad, with praise or censure. Now on each of the arts Thamus is reported to have said a great deal to Theuth, both in its favour and disfavour. It would take a long story to repeat it all. But when they came to the letters, Theuth began: 'This invention, O king, will make the Egyptians wiser, and better able to remember, it being a medicine which I have discovered both for memory and wisdom.' The king replied: 'Most ingenious Theuth, one man is capable of giving birth to an art, another of estimating
275 the amount of good or harm it will do to those who are intended to use it. And so now you, as being the father of letters, have ascribed to them, in your fondness, exactly the reverse of their real effects. For this invention of yours will produce forgetfulness in the minds of those who learn it, by causing them to neglect their memory, inasmuch as, from their confidence in writing, they will recollect by the external aid of foreign symbols, and not by the internal use of their own faculties. Your discovery, therefore, is a medicine not for memory, but for recollection,—for recalling to, not for keeping in mind. And you are providing for your disciples

a show of wisdom without the reality. For, acquiring by your means much information unaided by instruction, they will appear to possess much knowledge, while, in fact, they will, for the most part, know nothing at all; and, moreover, be disagreeable people to deal with, as having become wise in their own conceit, instead of truly wise.'

Ph. You possess a facility, Socrates, for making up tales of Egypt, or any other strange country you please.

Soc. We are told, my friend, that the voice of an oak, in the holy ground of Zeus of Dodona, was the first ever gifted with prophecy. The men of those days, not being clever like you moderns, were content, in their simplicity, to listen to an oak or a stone, if only it spake the truth. But to you, it seems, it makes a difference who the speaker is, and from what country he comes; you do not merely consider whether the fact be, or be not, as he states it.

Ph. Your reproof is just. And I believe the truth, with regard to letters, to be as the Theban pronounces.

Soc. He, therefore, who leaves behind him, and he again who receives an art in writing, with the idea that anything clear or fixed is to proceed from the writing, must be altogether a foolish-minded person, and, in truth, ignorant of Ammon's prediction, as he must suppose that written words can do something more than recall the things of which they treat to the mind of one who knows them already.

Ph. Most true.

Soc. For this, I conceive, Phædrus, is the evil of writing, and herein it closely resembles painting. The creatures of the latter art stand before you as if they were alive, but if you ask them a question, they look very solemn, and say not a word. And so it is with written discourses. You could fancy they speak as though they were possessed of sense, but if you wish to understand something they say, and question them about it, you find them ever repeating but one and the self-same story. Moreover, every discourse, once written, is tossed about from hand to hand, equally among those who understand it, and those for whom it is in nowise fitted; and it does not know to whom it ought, and to whom it ought not, to speak. And when misunderstood and unjustly attacked, it always needs its father to help it; for, unaided, it can neither retaliate, nor defend itself.

Ph. This again is most true.

Soc. But, hold! Is there not another kind
276 of discourse,—this one's legitimate brother? Let us see both how it arises, and how far more excellent and efficient than the other it grows.

Ph. What discourse do you mean, and how does it take its rise?

Soc. I mean that which is written with insight in the learner's mind, which is at once able to defend itself, and knows before whom to speak, and before whom to be silent.

Ph. You mean the wise man's discourse,

which is possessed both of life and soul, and of which the written one may fairly be called a shadow.

Soc. Most assuredly I do. But come now, answer me this. If a prudent husbandman had seeds which he cared for, and wished to come to fruit, would he seriously sow them in summer-time, in the gardens of Adonis, and delight to behold them growing up finely in eight days? or, if he did this at all, would he not do it as the mere pastime of a holiday; but, with all the aid of his husbandman's art, sow the seeds, on which he set serious store, in their proper soil, and be content to see them in the eighth month arrived at their maturity?

Ph. Yes, of course, Socrates; he would do the one seriously, and the other, as you say, by way of amusement.

Soc. And shall we say that he who has an insight into the just, the beautiful, and the good, shows less wisdom in the treatment of his seeds than the husbandman?

Ph. God forbid.

Soc. He will not then seriously set himself to write them in water, sowing them with ink by means of a pen, with the aid of words that are unable to defend themselves by speaking, and unable adequately to teach the truth.

Ph. Certainly, we may expect he will not.

Soc. Indeed we may. But in the gardens of letters he will sow his seeds, I imagine, and write, when he does write, for mere amusement, treasuring up aids to the memory both for him-

self, when he comes to the years of forgetfulness, and for all who are following on the same road. And he will please himself with watching his plants in their tender growth. And while others are indulging in other recreations, refreshing themselves it may be with feast and kindred pleasure, he, if I mistake not, will in place of such amusements be spending his holiday in the pastime I mention.

Ph. And a noble pastime it is, Socrates, by the side of but a poor one, when a man who can make discourses his play diverts himself with telling stories about justice and virtue.

Soc. Yes, my dear Phædrus, it is noble; but far nobler, I imagine, is a man's work on these matters, when finding a congenial soul, he avails himself of the dialectical art to sow and plant therein scientific words, which are
277 competent to defend themselves, and him who planted them, and are not unfruitful, but bear seed in their turn, from which other words springing up in other minds are capable of preserving this precious seed ever undecaying, and making their possessor ever happy, so far as happiness is possible for man.

Ph. Yes, Socrates, this is indeed far nobler than the other.

Soc. Now then, Phædrus, that this point is settled, we are in a condition, you will observe, to decide on our former questions.

Ph. Which do you mean?

Soc. Those which led us in our desire to solve them to the point where we are at present

arrived; one being to examine the deservedness of the reproach cast on Lysias for writing speeches; the other, to discover, with regard to speeches themselves, what were written according to, and what without, rule of art. Now this distinction appears to me to have been marked with sufficient clearness.

Ph. And so it did to me; but I should be glad to be reminded of it again.

Soc. Before a speaker is acquainted with the true nature of each subject on which he speaks or writes, and is become able to give it a general definition, and then again knows how to divide it into kinds till he reaches the indivisible; before he has investigated in like manner the nature of the soul, and finding the kind of discourse suitable for each kind of soul, orders and embellishes his discourse accordingly; offering to complex souls discourses of complex structure and rich in every harmony; but simple discourses to simple souls: before, I say, he is able to understand and do all this, he cannot possibly handle discourse with the art of which it admits, whether his object be to instruct or persuade, as the whole of our previous argument has tended to prove.

Ph. Yes, this is pretty nearly just as I thought it was.

Soc. But what are we to say with respect to the honour or disgrace of writing and speaking, and the conditions under which they may justly incur or avoid reproach? Have not our late arguments sufficed to show?

Ph. What?

Soc. That if Lysias or any one else has ever written, or means to write, either a private book, or a public document in the shape of a law, with the idea that his writing contains a great certainty and clearness; in this case reproach attaches to the writer, whether people say so or not. For a total blindness with regard to justice and injustice, to virtue and vice, escapes not in sooth the charge of being truly disgraceful, even though it has been lauded by all the world.

Ph. No; indeed it does not.

Soc. But whoever believes that in a written discourse, whatever be the subject, there must of necessity be much that is sportive; and that no discourse worthy of serious attention has ever, either in verse or prose, been written or spoken—if spoken in the way that our declamations are recited, by rote, without examination
278 or instruction, merely to persuade — but that the very best of them are nothing else than reminders to knowledge; whoever believes this, and believes on the other hand, that in discourses, and only in discourses taught, and for the sake of instruction spoken and really written in the soul of the hearer, about things just and beautiful and good, there is found what is clear and perfect, and worthy of attention; and that such discourses ought to be accounted his own legitimate offspring; first, the one in his own mind, if it be there by his own discovery; then those which children or brothers of the former

have either after or at the same time sprung up worthily in the minds of others: whoever, I say, thinks this of these discourses, and cares for none beside, will go near, Phædrus, to be such a man as you and I would pray we might both become.

Ph. Yes, Socrates, with all my heart I wish and pray for such a lot.

Soc. Be we then content to have amused ourselves thus far with the subject of speaking; and go you now, Phædrus, and tell Lysias, that you and I went down together to the spring and favoured haunt of the nymphs, where we heard words which bade us tell Lysias and all writers of speeches; Homer, and all makers of poetry, without music or with; Solon, and all framers of political writings under the name of laws; that if they composed their works with a knowledge of the truth, and with ability to defend them if brought to account, and with the power, moreover, of making by the words of their mouth the writings of their pen appear but poor, they ought not to be named from these holiday productions, but from those which formed their earnest work.

Ph. What are the names then that you accord them?

Soc. To call them wise, Phædrus, seems to me indeed to be a great matter, and beseeming God alone. Lovers of wisdom (philosophers), or some name of this kind, would both suit them better and be in better taste.

Ph. And nothing at all out of the way either.

Soc. But the man, on the other hand, who has nothing more precious to show than what he long tortured his brain to write or compose, with elaborate patching and careful retrenching, that man, I conceive, you may justly denominate either poet, or speech-writer, or writer of laws.

Ph. Justly indeed.

Soc. Go then, tell this to your friend.

Ph. But you, Socrates, what will you do? We must not pass over your friend either.

Soc. Whom do you mean?

Ph. Isocrates the fair. What message will you take him, Socrates? What shall we say that he is?

Soc. Isocrates is still young, Phædrus; what
279 I augur of him, however, I am willing to tell you.

Ph. What is that, pray?

Soc. I think better of his genius than to compare it with the speech-writing of Lysias. Moreover, I account him endued with a nobler nature. So that there will be nothing surprising if, as he advances in years, he will in the art of speaking even, to which he is now applying himself, leave all who have hitherto handled it, far as children behind him; and nothing surprising either if he be not content with such achievements, but be led by a godlier impulse to holier and higher things. For nature, my friend, has implanted a love of wisdom in the mind of the man. This then is the message I will take from the gods of the spot to Isocrates as my favourite, and do you take the one I gave you to Lysias, as yours.

Ph. It shall be done—but let us depart, the rather as the heat of the day is over.

Soc. Were it not better to offer up a prayer to these gods before we go?

Ph. Oh yes.

Soc. Beloved Pan, and all ye other gods who here abide, grant me to be beautiful in the inner man, and all I have of outer things to be at peace with those within. May I count the wise man only rich. And may my store of gold be such as none but the good can bear.

Phædrus, need we anything more? For myself I have prayed enough.

Ph. For me too pray the same. Friends share and share alike.

Soc. Let us go.

LYSIS

SUMMARY OF THE LYSIS

WALKING one day from the Academy to the Lyceum, 203
Socrates fell in with two friends of his, named Hippothales and Ctesippus, who were standing with some other young men near the open door of a palæstra, and was by them invited to enter. Before complying with their request, he rallies Hippothales, who seems a foolish amorous person, on the present object of his affections; and Ctesippus, joining in the attack, ridicules the timid, fulsome, pompous style in which Hippothales was accustomed to address his beloved, the young and beautiful Lysis. Socrates points out the evil of this habit; and promises that, if Hippothales will introduce him to Lysis, he will show how he ought to be addressed. Hippothales assents, and adds, 'You will find him in the palæstra, Socrates; and if he does not come to you of his own accord, as he is pretty sure to do when you begin to talk—for he is very fond of listening—you can get to know him through his great friend Menexenus, who is a cousin to Ctesippus here, and whom you will also find in the palæstra.'

So Socrates enters and sees Lysis standing among his 207
playfellows, beautiful as a young god. Socrates then sits down, and begins to talk to the young men who had come in with him. Lysis eyes him wistfully, but is too modest to join the group, till Menexenus comes in from the outer court, and then he too comes up and sits down by his friend. Socrates, always pleased with the sight of friends, begins to question Menexenus about their common friendship. But Menexenus is suddenly

called away; and then Socrates turns to Lysis, and leaving the subject of friendship for the present, proceeds to give Hippothales a specimen of the manner in which a lover should address his beloved. This merely consists in putting him down, instead of puffing him up, as Hippothales was wont to do. Socrates makes Lysis admit that, though his father and mother are very fond of him, and wish to see him happy, they are very far from letting him do what he likes. On the contrary, they scold him, and thwart him, and put him under tutors and governors; and all this, not because he is not old enough to do as he likes—for they let him do some things, young as he is—but because he is not wise enough. He goes to school, because he has no notions of things. And how can he have high notions, when he has no notions?

211 Thus does Socrates teach humility; and Lysis, who is really a charming boy, takes the lesson in very good part. But at this moment Menexenus comes back to the palæstra, and Socrates returns to the subject of friendship.

212 Menexenus, he says, you are most fortunate at your early age to have found a friend, and such a friend as Lysis. I do so envy you, for there is nothing I value so much as a friend. But what is friendship? And, when a man loves another, which is the friend? the lover, or the loved? or doesn't it matter? At first Menexenus thinks it does not matter. Driven from this view, he thinks it must be the lover; and then that it must be the loved one. But, as no view seems satisfactory, Socrates opines that they are not conducting the search in a proper method; and, as Lysis chimes in with a very pretty assent, Socrates turns to him and proposes that they should try a different tact, and call in the aid of the poets, our fathers in wisdom. What then do the poets say? Homer asserts that 'God brings like to like.' And don't our natural philosophers say the same? Don't they assert that like loves like? Is likeness then the cause of friendship? But this won't hold. The bad are not friends to the bad, because they are so inconsistent, that they are not even like

themselves; much less are they like other bad men. And the good are not friends to the good, because they are sufficient in themselves. They don't need other good men, and therefore they are not friends to them. If then likeness is not the cause of friendship, let us try the opposite, and say that likeness is a cause of aversion, and unlikeness of friendship. Now what do our poets and philosophers say to this? Doesn't Hesiod tell us that 'Potter ever jars with potter?' And don't our philosophers tell us that dry craves for moist, and cold for hot, and so on? But this won't hold either; for then the just would be friends to the unjust, and the good to the bad: which is absurd.

Once more. We have found that good is not the 216
friend of good, nor evil of evil. But may it not be that that which is neither good nor evil is the friend of a good thing? Take the human body, for instance. That essentially is neither good nor evil. But if any evil, as disease, comes upon it, then for the sake of getting rid of an evil thing it becomes the friend of the medical art, which is a good thing. So too with philosophers, or those who desire wisdom. They are not wholly wise; or they would have wisdom, instead of desiring it. Nor are they unwise, or they would not desire it. So they too, being neither good nor evil, are friends of a thing which is good. Surely then we have now discovered the nature of friendship. There is friendship, where that, which is neither good nor evil, desires a good thing because of the presence of an evil thing. This conclusion is received by the boys with hearty assent. But, though Socrates at first regards it with complacency, a suspicion steals upon him that it is not altogether right. The friend, it appears, is a friend of some one for the sake of a good thing because of an evil thing. Then this good thing is a friend, or loved thing, for the sake of some other thing, which is also good, and also loved: And this again for the sake of some other good thing. And so on. At last therefore we come to that good thing which has no beyond; that is, to good absolutely. And of this we are the friend because of evil. But, if evil were removed, we

should be friends of it no more; for its whole use and purport would be gone; that is, there would be no friendship. This explanation therefore will not do.

221 Once more. Is it not possible for a man to love an object, not for the sake of any ulterior end, but simply because he desires it? Now he desires what he wants; and he wants what he is deprived of, and he is deprived of that which is his own. Here then perhaps is the source of friendship. We are friends of that which belongs to us, which is akin to us, which is bound to us by some mysterious tie. But this then would be like us. But we cannot love that, for we have shown that like cannot be the friend of like. And surely it would be good. But we cannot love that, for we have shown that good cannot be the final object of friendship. Are we then wrong altogether, and must we give up our search?

223 With this confession of failure Socrates was going to invite the opinion of the elders of the party, when the governor of the two boys swooped down upon them and persisted in taking them home. ''Tis hard,' concludes Socrates, 'that we three should be such friends, and yet not know what a friend is!'

LYSIS

I WAS walking straight from the Academy to 203
the Lyceum, by the road which skirts the outside of the walls, and had reached the little gate where is the source of the Panops, when I fell in with Hippothales, the son of Hieronymus, Ctesippus the Pæanian, and some more young men, standing together in a group. Hippothales, seeing me approach, called out, Ha, Socrates, whither and whence?

From the Academy, I replied, and I am going straight to the Lyceum.

Straight to us, I hope, cried he. Won't you turn in? it will be worth your while.

Turn in where? said I; and whom do you mean by us? There, he replied, pointing out to me an enclosure facing us in the wall, with an open door. There we are passing our time, he added; we whom you see, and a great many other fine fellows too.

And what's all this, pray? and how are you passing your time?

This is a palæstra that has been lately erected, 204
and we are passing our time principally in conversations, of which we should be very glad to give you a share.

You are very kind, I answered. And who is your teacher there?

A friend and admirer of yours, Miccus.

And no ordinary man either, I rejoined; a most competent sophist.

Won't you come with us then, he said, to see both him and all our party there too?

Here, where I am, was my reply, I should like first to be informed, what I am to enter for, and who is your prime beauty?

Some think one, and some another, Socrates. But whom do you think, Hippothales? tell me this. He answered only with a blush. So I added, Hippothales, son of Hieronymus, there is no longer any need for you to tell me whether you are in love or not, since I am sure you are not only in love, but pretty far gone in it too by this time. For though in most matters I am a poor useless creature, yet by some means or other I have received from heaven the gift of being able to detect at a glance both a lover and a beloved. On hearing this, he blushed still more deeply than before. Whereupon Ctesippus broke in, It is very fine of you, Hippothales, turning red in this way, and making such a fuss about telling Socrates the name, when he is quite sure, if he stays ever so short a time in your company, to be bored to death by hearing it always repeated. At any rate, Socrates, he has deafened *our* ears for us, and filled them full of Lysis. Nay, if he be but a little tipsy when he talks of him, we can easily fancy, on waking even the next

morning, that we are still hearing the name of Lysis. But his constant talk about him, bad as it is, is not the worst; nothing like so bad as when he begins to deluge us with his poems and speeches, and, worse and worse, to sing a song on his darling in a portentous voice, which we are compelled to listen to with patience. And yet now, when questioned by you, he blushes.

Your Lysis must be quite a juvenile, I rejoined; I conjecture this from my not knowing the name when you mentioned it.

Why, they don't often call him by his own name, Socrates; he still goes by his father's, the latter being so well known. Still, I am sure, you cannot be a stranger to the boy's appearance; that's quite enough to know him by.

Say then, whose son he is.

Democrates's of Œxone, his eldest.

Well done, Hippothales, said I. A noble, and in every way a brilliant choice is this which you have made. But come now, go on about him with me, just as you do with your friends here, that I may judge whether you know 205
what language a lover ought to hold with regard to his favourite, either to his face or before others.

And do you really, Socrates, set any value on what this fellow says?

Do you mean, I asked, absolutely to deny being in love with the person he mentions?

No, not that, he answered; but I do the making verses or speeches on him.

He is out of his senses, doting, mad, cried

Ctesippus. But, I replied, I don't want to hear any of your verses, Hippothales, nor any song either that you may have composed upon your darling; but I should like to have an idea of their sense, that I may know how you behave toward your favourite.

Ctesippus will tell you all about it, Socrates, I don't doubt; he must remember it well enough, if it be true, as he says, that I dinned it into his ears till he was deaf.

Oh, I know it, cried Ctesippus, right thoroughly too. It is such a joke, Socrates. The idea of a lover devoting himself exclusively to the object of his love, and yet having nothing of a personal interest to say to him that any child might not say; isn't it absurd? But stories that all the city rings with, about Democrates, and Lysis the boy's grandfather, and all his ancestors—their wealth, their breeds of horses, their victories at the Pythian, Isthmian, Nemean, with four steeds and single—all these he works into poem and speech; ay, and stories too, still further out of date than these. For in a sort of poem the other day, he gave us the whole account of Hercules's entertainment, telling us how their ancestor received that hero into his house on the strength of his relationship, being himself son of Zeus, by the daughter of the founder of Œxone. Yes, Socrates, such, among others, are the old wives' tales that our lover here is ever singing and reciting, and condemning us moreover to listen to.

On hearing this, I said to the lover, You

ridiculous Hippothales, are you making and singing a hymn of praise on yourself before you have won?

It isn't on myself, Socrates, that I either make or sing it.

You fancy not, said I.

How is it so? said he.

In every way, I replied, these songs have reference to you. If you succeed in winning such a youth as you describe, all that you have said and sung will redound to your honour, and be in fact your hymn of triumph, as if you had gained a victory in obtaining such a favourite. But if he escape your grasp, then, the higher the eulogium you have passed on him, the greater will be the blessings which you will seem to have missed, and the greater consequently the ridicule you will incur. All 206
connoisseurs therefore in matters of love are careful of praising their favourites before they have won them, from their doubts as to the result of the affair. Moreover, your beauties, when lauded and made much of, become gorged with pride and arrogance. Don't you think so?

I do, he replied.

And the more arrogant they are, the harder they become to be caught?

It is so to be expected, at any rate.

Well, what should you say to a huntsman that frightened the prey he was in chase of, and rendered it harder to be caught?

That he was a very sorry one, certainly.

And if by speech and song he renders it wild instead of luring it, he can be no favourite of the Muses; can he?

I think not.

Have a care then, Hippothales, that you do not lay yourself open with your poetry to all these reproaches. And yet I am sure, that to a man, who injured himself by his poetry, you would not be willing to accord the title of a good poet, so long as he did himself harm.

No, indeed, that would be too unreasonable, he replied. But it is on this very account, Socrates, that I put myself in your hands, and beg you to give me any advice you may have to bestow, as to the course of conduct or conversation that a lover ought to adopt in order to render himself agreeable to the object of his affection.

That were no such easy matter, I replied. But if you would bring me to speech of Lysis, perhaps I could give you a specimen of what you ought to say to him, in place of the speeches and songs which you are in the habit of treating him with, according to your friends here.

Well, there is no difficulty in that, he rejoined. If you will only go into the palæstra with Ctesippus, and sit down and begin to talk, I have little doubt that he will come to you of his own accord; for he is singularly fond of listening; and, moreover, as they are keeping the Hermæa, boys and young men are all mixed up together to-day. So he is pretty certain to join you. But if he does not,

Ctesippus knows him, through his cousin Menexenus, who is Lysis's particular friend. You can get Ctesippus therefore to summon him, in case he does not come of himself.

This be our plan, I cried. And taking Ctesippus with me, I walked towards the palæstra, the rest following.

On entering we found that the boys had finished their sacrifices, and, the ceremony being now pretty well over, were playing together at knuckle-bones, all in their holiday-dress. The greater part were carrying on their game in the court outside, but some of them were in a corner of the undressing-room, playing at odd and even with a number of bones which they drew out of small baskets. Round these were stationed others looking on, among whom was Lysis; and he stood in the midst of boys and youths with a chaplet on his head, unmatched in face or form. You 207
would say he was not beautiful merely, but even of a noble mien. For ourselves, we withdrew to the opposite part of the room, and sitting down, as nothing was going on there, began to talk. While thus engaged, Lysis kept turning round and eyeing us, evidently wishing to join us. For some time though he remained in doubt, not liking to walk up alone. But when Menexenus looked in from his game in the court, and on seeing Ctesippus and me came to sit down with us, Lysis also followed at sight of his friend, and took a seat by his side. Then the others came up too, and

among them Hippothales; who, seeing them form into a good-sized group, screened himself behind them in a position where he did not think he could be seen by Lysis; so fearful was he of giving him offence. And thus placed near him, he listened to our conversation.

I began it by turning my eyes on Menexenus, and saying, Son of Demophon, which of you two is the elder?

It is a disputed point, he replied.

And do you dispute too, which is the better fellow?

Certainly, was his answer.

And so too, I suppose, which is the more beautiful?

At this they both laughed. I will not ask you, I added, which is the wealthier; for you are friends, are you not?

That we are! they both cried.

And friends, they tell us, share and share alike; so in this respect, at any rate, there will be no difference between you, if only you give me a true account of your friendship.

To this they both assented.

I was then proceeding to inquire which of the two excelled in justice, and which in wisdom, when some one came up and carried off Menexenus, telling him that the master of the palæstra wanted him—I presume, on business connected with the sacrifice. Accordingly he left us, and I went on questioning Lysis. Lysis, said I, I suppose your father and mother love you very dearly.

Very dearly, he answered.

They would wish you then to be as happy as possible.

Of course.

Do you think a man happy if he is a slave, and may not do what he wants?

No, that indeed I don't.

Well, if your father and mother love you, and wish you to become happy, it is clear that they try in every way to make you happy.

To be sure they do.

They allow you then, I suppose, to do what you wish, and never scold you, or hinder you from doing what you want to do.

Yes, but they do though, Socrates, and pretty frequently too.

How? said I. They wish you to be happy, 208
and yet hinder you from doing what you want. But tell me this: If you wanted to ride on one of your father's chariots, and take the reins during a race, would they not allow you?

No, most assuredly they would not.

Whom would they then? I asked.

There is a charioteer paid by my father.

Paid! cried I. Do they allow a paid servant in preference to you to do what he pleases with the horses, and, what is more, give him money for so doing?

Not a doubt about it, Socrates, he replied.

Well, but your pair of mules I am sure they let you drive; and even if you wished to take the whip and whip them, they would allow you.

Allow me, would they? said he.

Would they not? said I. Is there no one allowed to whip them?

Of course there is; the mule-driver.

Is he a slave or free?

A slave, he answered.

A slave then, it appears, they think of more account than you, their son; they entrust their property to him rather than to you: and they allow him to do what he pleases, while you they hinder. But answer me further. Do they let you rule yourself, or not even allow you this?

Rule myself! I should think not, said he.

You have some one to rule you then?

Yes, my governor here.

Not a slave?

Yes, but he is though, ours.

Shocking! I exclaimed. A free man to be ruled by a slave. But how, pray, does this governor exercise his authority?

He takes me to school, of course.

And do you mean to say that they rule you there too—the schoolmasters?

Most certainly they do.

Very many then, it appears, are the masters and rulers whom your father sets over you on purpose. But come now, when you go home to your mother, she, I am sure, lets you do what you please—that you may be as happy as she can make you—either with her wool or her loom, when she is spinning. It cannot possibly be that she hinders you from touching her spathe or her comb, or any other of her spinning implements.

He burst out a-laughing. I can assure you, Socrates, he said, she not only hinders me, but would get me a good beating if I did touch them.

Beating! cried I. You haven't done your father or mother any wrong, have you?

Not I, he answered.

Whatever is the reason then that they hinder you in this shocking manner from being happy, and doing what you like; and keep you all the day long in bondage to some one or other,—and, in a word, doing hardly anything at all you want to do? So that it seems you get no good whatever from your fortune, large as it is, but all have control over it, rather than you; nor again from that beauti- 209
ful person of yours; for it too is under the care and charge of other people, while you, poor Lysis, have control over nothing at all, nor do a single thing you wish.

Because I'm not of age, Socrates.

That should be no hindrance, son of Democrates, since there are things, I fancy, which both your father and mother allow you to do, without waiting for you to be of age. When they wish, for example, to have anything written or read, it is you, I conceive, whom they appoint to the office before any one else in the house. Isn't it?

Beyond a question, he replied.

In these matters then you are allowed to do as you please: you may write whichever letter you like first, and whichever you like

second. And in reading you enjoy the same liberty. And when you take up your lyre, neither father nor mother, I imagine, hinder you from tightening or loosening such strings as you choose, or from playing with your fingers or stick, as you may think proper. Or do they hinder you in such matters?

Oh dear no! he exclaimed.

What in the world then can be the reason, Lysis, that in these matters they don't hinder you, while in the former they do?

I suppose it is, Socrates, because I understand the one, and don't understand the other.

Oh! that's it, is it, my fine fellow? It is not then for you to be old enough that your father is waiting to hand over everything; but on the very day that he thinks you are wiser than he is, he will hand over to you both himself and all his possessions.

I shouldn't wonder, said he.

Nor I, said I. But again. Does your neighbour follow the same rule that your father does with regard to you? Do you expect he will hand over to you his house to manage, as soon as he thinks you have a better idea of the management of a house than he has himself; or will he keep it in his own hands?

Hand it over to me, I should think.

And the Athenians? Will they, do you imagine, hand over to you their matters directly they perceive that you are wise enough to manage them?

Yes, I expect so.

But come now, I asked, what will the great king do? When his meat is cooking, will he allow his eldest son, heir to the throne of Asia, to throw into the gravy whatever he chooses; or us rather, if we come before him, and prove that we have a better idea than his son has of dressing a dish?

Us, to be sure, said he.

And the prince he won't allow to put in the least morsel even; while with us he would make no difficulty, though we wished to throw in salt by handfuls?

Exactly.

Once more. If his son had something the matter with his eyes, would he allow him to touch them himself, if he thought him ignorant 210
of the healing art, or rather hinder him?

Hinder him.

But against us on the other hand, if he conceived us to be skilled in the art, he would, I imagine, make no objection, even though we wished to force open the eyes, and sprinkle in ashes, as he would suppose us to be rightly advised.

True, he would not.

And so, with everything else whatsoever, he would entrust it to us rather than to himself or his son, if he believed that we knew more about it than either of them did.

Necessarily he would, Socrates.

You see then, said I, how the case stands, dear Lysis. In matters of which we have knowledge all people will trust us, whether Greeks

or barbarians, men or women; we shall act, with regard to them, exactly as we please; no one will intentionally stand in our way; and not only shall we be free ourselves in these matters, but we shall be lords over others, and they will be in fact our property, as we shall have the enjoyment of them. With regard to matters, on the other hand, into which we have acquired no insight, no one will ever allow us to act as we think proper, but all persons, to the best of their power, will hinder us from meddling with them; not only strangers, but even our own father and mother, and any nearer relation if we possess one; and we ourselves in these matters shall be subject to others, and they will be in fact the property of others, as we shall derive no advantage from them. Do you allow this to be the case?

I do.

Will any one then count us his friends, will any one love us, in those matters in which we are of no use?

Indeed no.

According to this then, not even you are loved by your own father, nor is any one else by any one else in the world, in so far as you or he is useless?

So it would appear, he said.

If therefore you acquire knowledge, my son, all men will be friendly to you, all men will be attached to you; for you will be useful and good. If not, you will have no friend in any one, not even in your father or mother, or

any of your own family. Now is it possible, Lysis, for a man to have a great idea of himself in those matters of which he has as yet no idea?

How can he possibly? he replied.

And if you still require, as you do, an instructor, you are still without ideas.

True, he answered.

It cannot be then, that you have a great idea of yourself, if as yet you have no idea.

No really, Socrates, I don't see how I can.

On receiving this reply from Lysis, I turned my eyes on Hippothales, and was on the point of making a great blunder. For it came into my head to say, This is the way, Hippothales, that you should talk to your favourite, humbling and checking, instead of puffing him up and pampering him, as you now do. However, on seeing him writhing with agitation at the turn the conversation was taking, I recollected that, though standing so near, he didn't wish to be seen by Lysis. So I recovered myself in time, and forbore to address him.

At this moment too Menexenus returned, 211
and took the seat by Lysis, from which he had previously arisen. Whereupon Lysis, in a boyish fondling way, said to me in a low voice, so that Menexenus couldn't hear, I say, Socrates, say over again to Menexenus what you have been saying to me.

No, Lysis, I replied; *you* must tell him that: you were certainly attending.

I should think I was too, he rejoined.

Try to remember it then, as well as you can, that you may give him a clear account of the whole; and if there's anything you forget, ask me about it some other day—the first time you meet me.

Well, I'll do as you tell me, Socrates, with all my heart; you may rely upon that. But say something else to him now, will you, that I too may hear it, till it's time for me to go home.

Well, I must do so, I replied, since it's you who bid me. But mind you come to my aid, if Menexenus tries to baffle me. You know, don't you, that he's fond of a dispute.

Oh yes, desperately, I know. And that's the very reason I want you to talk with him.

That I make myself ridiculous, eh?

Oh dear no, Socrates, but that you may put him down.

Put him down, indeed, cried I; that's no such easy matter. He's a redoubtable man, this; a scholar of Ctesippus's. And here's his master too himself to help him—don't you see?—Ctesippus.

Trouble yourself about no one, Socrates, he said; but begin, attack him.

As you will, said I.

At this point of our by-play Ctesippus cried out, What's that you two there are feasting on by yourselves, without giving us a share?

Never fear, said I, you shall have a share. There's something I've said that Lysis here doesn't understand. He says though, he

thinks Menexenus knows, and bids me ask him.

Why don't you ask him then? he rejoined.

Just what I mean to do, I replied. Answer, Menexenus, the questions I ask. From my earliest childhood I have had a particular fancy; every one has. One longs for horses, another for dogs, a third for money, a fourth for office. For my part, I look on these matters with equanimity, but on the acquisition of friends with all a lover's passion; and I should like to get a good friend rather than the best quail or cock in the world; I should prefer one to both horse and dog; nay, I fully believe, that I would far sooner acquire a friend and companion, than all the gold of Darius, ay, or than Darius himself. So fond am I of friendship. On seeing therefore you and 212
Lysis, I am lost in wonder, while I count you most happy, at your being able, at your years, to acquire this treasure with such readiness and ease; in that you, Menexenus, have gained so early and true a friend in Lysis, and he the same in you; while I, on the contrary, am so far from making the acquisition, that I do not even know how one man becomes the friend of another, but wish on this very point to appeal to you as a connoisseur. Answer me this. When one loves another, which of the two becomes the friend? the lover of the loved, or the loved of the lover? Or does it make no difference?

None in the world, that I can see, he replied.

How? said I; are both friends, if only one loves?

I think so, he answered.

Indeed! is it not possible for one who loves not to be loved in return by the object of his love?

It is.

Nay, is it not possible for him even to be hated? treatment, if I mistake not, which lovers frequently fancy they receive at the hands of their favourites. Though they love their darlings as dearly as possible, they often imagine that they are not loved in return, often that they are even hated. Don't you believe this to be true?

Quite true, he replied.

Well, in such a case as this, the one loves, the other is loved.

Just so.

Which of the two then is the friend of the other? the lover of the loved, whether or no he be loved in return, and even if he be hated, or the loved of the lover? or is neither the friend of the other, unless both love each other?

The latter certainly seems to be the case, Socrates.

If so, I continued, we think differently now from what we did before. Then it appeared that, if one loved, both were friends; but now, that, unless both love, neither are friends.

Yes, I'm afraid we have contradicted ourselves.

This being the case then, the lover has not a friend in anything that does not love him in return.

Apparently not.

People then have not friends in horses, unless their horses love them in return, nor in quails, nor in dogs, nor again in wine or gymnastics, unless their love be returned; nor in wisdom, unless wisdom loves them in return. But in each of these cases the individual loves the object, but has not a friend in it; and the poet is wrong who says:

Happy the man who has friends in his children, and solid-hoofed horses,
Friends too in dogs of the chase, friends in a far-away land.

I don't think he is wrong, Socrates.

But do you think he's right?

Yes, I do.

The lover then, it appears, Menexenus, *has* a friend in the object of his love, whether the object love, or even hate him. Just as quite young children, who are either not yet old 213
enough to love, or are old enough even to feel hatred when punished by father or mother, are yet, at the very time that they are hating, friends to their parents in the very highest degree.

Yes, such appears to be the case.

By this reasoning then it is not the lover that is the friend, but the object of love.

Apparently.

And so the object of hatred is the enemy, not the hater.

Clearly.

It frequently happens then that people are loved by their enemies, and hated by their friends; that is, are friends to their enemies, and enemies to their friends; if it be true that the loved is the friend, and not the lover. But surely, my dear Menexenus, it were grossly unreasonable, nay rather I think altogether impossible, for a man to be an enemy to his friend, and a friend to his enemy.

Yes, Socrates, it does seem impossible.

Well then, if this be impossible, it must be the lover that is the friend of the loved.

Clearly.

And so again the hater must be the enemy of the object hated.

Necessarily.

But if this be true, we cannot help arriving at the same conclusion as we did in the former case; namely, that it often happens that a man is a friend of one that is no friend, nay rather an enemy; as often, that is as he is not loved, but even hated, by the man whom he loves: and often again, that he is an enemy of one that is no enemy, but rather a friend; as often, that is, as he is not hated, but even loved, by the man whom he hates.

No, I am afraid we can't.

What are we to do then, said I, if neither those who love are to be friends, nor those who are loved, nor, again, those who both love and are loved? Are there any other people beside these that we can say become friends to each other?

To tell you the truth, Socrates, said he, I don't see my way at all.

Is it possible, Menexenus, said I, that from first to last we have been conducting our search improperly?

I am sure I think it is, Socrates, cried Lysis. And he blushed as he said so. For the words seemed to burst from him against his will in the intensity of the interest he was paying to the conversation; an interest which his countenance had evinced all the time we were talking.

I then, wishing to relieve Menexenus, and charmed with the other's intelligence, turned to Lysis, and directing my discourse to him, observed, Yes, Lysis, you are quite right, I think, in saying that, if we had conducted our search properly, we should never have lost ourselves in this manner: Let us proceed, however, on this line of inquiry no longer—for I look upon it as a very difficult sort of road—but let us go back again to that point at which we turned aside, and follow in the steps of the poets. For poets, I conceive, are as good as 214
fathers and guides to us in matters of wisdom. Well, the poets, if I mistake not, put forward no slight claims for those who happen to be friends, but tell us that it is God Himself who makes them friends, by leading them one to another. They express, if I remember right, their opinion thus—

Like men, I trow, to like God ever leads,

and makes them known. You have met with the verse, have you not?

Oh yes.

And also with the writings of those learned sages which tell the same story; namely, that like must of necessity be ever friendly with like. And these are they, if I mistake not, who talk and write on nature and the universe.

True, they are.

Well, do you think they are right in what they say? I asked.

Perhaps, said he.

Perhaps, I answered, in half; perhaps too, even in all; only we don't understand. For, as it appears to us, the nearer wicked men come to each other, and the more they see of each other, the greater enemies they become. For they injure each other. And it is impossible, I take it, for men to be friends, if they injure and are injured in turn.

So it is, he replied.

By this then it would appear, that half of their assertion cannot be true, if we suppose them to mean that wicked men are like one another.

So it would.

But they mean to say, I imagine, that the good are like and friendly with the good; but that the bad, as is remarked of them in another place, are not ever even like themselves, but are variable and not to be reckoned upon. And if a thing be unlike and at variance with itself, it will be long, I take it, before it be-

comes like to or friendly with anything else. Don't you think so too?

I do, he answered.

When therefore, my friend, our authors assert that like is friendly with like, they mean, I imagine, to intimate, though obscurely enough, that the good man is a friend to the good man only; but that the bad man never engages in a true friendship either with a good or a bad man. Do you agree? He nodded assent. We know then now, I continued, who it is that are friends; for our argument shows us that it must be those who are good.

Quite clearly too, I think, said he.

And so do I, I rejoined. Still there is a something in the way that troubles me; so let us, with the help of heaven, see what it is that I suspect. Like men are friendly with like men, in so far as they are like, and such a man is useful to such a man. Or rather, let us put it in this way. Is there any good or harm that a like thing can do to a like thing, which it cannot also do to itself? is there 215
any that can be done to it, which cannot also be done to it by itself? And if not, how can such things be held in regard by each other, when they have no means of assisting one another? Can this possibly be?

No, not possibly.

And if a thing be not held in regard, can it be a friend?

Certainly not.

But, you will say, the like man is not a

friend to the like man; but the good will be a friend to the good, in so far as he is good, not in so far as he is like.

Perhaps I may.

And I should rejoin, Will not the good man, in so far as he is good, be found to be sufficient for himself?

Yes.

And if sufficient, he will want nothing so far as his sufficiency goes.

Of course not.

And if he does not want anything, he won't feel regard for anything either.

To be sure not.

And what he does not feel regard for, he cannot love.

Not he.

And if he does not love, he won't be a friend.

Clearly not.

How then, I wonder, will the good be ever friends at all with the good, when neither in absence do they feel regret for each other, being sufficient for themselves apart, nor when present together have they any need of one another? Is there any possible way by which such people can be brought to care for each other?

None whatever.

And if they do not care for each other, they cannot possibly be friends.

True, they cannot

Look and see then, Lysis, how we have been led into error; if I mistake not, we are

deceived in the whole, and not only in the half.

How so? he asked.

Once upon a time, I replied, I heard a statement made which has just this moment flashed across my mind; it was, that nothing is so hostile to like as like, none so hostile to the good as the good. And among other arguments, my informant adduced the authority of Hesiod, telling me that, according to him,

> Potter ever jars with potter, bard with bard, and poor with poor.

And so, he added, by a universal and infallible law the nearer any two things resemble one another, the fuller do they become of envy, strife, and hatred; and the greater the dissimilarity, the greater the friendship. For the poor are obliged to make themselves friends of the rich, and the weak of the strong, for the sake of their assistance; the sick man also must be friendly with the physician; and, in short, every one who is without knowledge must feel regard and affection for those who possess it. Nay, he proceeded with increased magnificence of position to assert, that the like was so far from being friendly with the like, that the exact opposite was the case; the more any two things were contrary, the more were they friendly to each other. For everything, he says, craves for its contrary, and not for its like; the dry craves for moisture, the cold for heat, the bitter for sweetness, the sharp for

bluntness, the empty to be filled, the full to be emptied. And everything else follows the same rule. For the contrary, he added, is food to the contrary, the like can derive no advantage from the like. And I can assure you I thought him extremely clever as he said
216 all this; he stated his case so well. But you, my friends, what do you think of it?

Oh, it seems very fair at first hearing, said Menexenus.

Shall we admit then that nothing is so friendly to a thing as its contrary?

By all means.

But if we do, Menexenus, will there not spring upon us suddenly and uncouthly and exultingly those universal-knowledge men, the masters of dispute, and ask us, whether there is anything in the world so contrary to enmity as friendship? And if they do, what must be our answer? Can we possibly help admitting that they are right?

No, we cannot.

Well then, they will say, is friendship a friend to enmity, or enmity to friendship?

Neither one nor the other, he replied.

But justice, I suppose, is a friend to injustice, temperance to intemperance, good to evil.

No, I don't think this can be the case.

Well but, I rejoined, if one thing is friend to another thing in virtue of being its contrary, these things must of necessity be friendly.

So they must, he allowed.

It follows then, I think, that neither like is friendly with like, nor contrary with contrary.

Apparently it does.

Well then, said I, let us look again, and see whether we be not still as far as ever from finding friendship, since it is clearly none of these things I have mentioned, but whether that which is neither good nor evil may not possibly turn out, however late, to be friendly with the good.

How do you mean? he asked.

Why, to tell you the truth, said I, I don't know myself, being quite dizzied by the entanglement of the subject. I am inclined though to think that, in the words of the old proverb, the Beautiful is friendly. Certainly the friendly has the appearance of being something soft and smooth and slippery; and probably it is from being of this character that it slides and slips through our fingers so easily. Now I am of this opinion, because the good, I assert, is beautiful. Don't you think so?

I do, said he.

I further assert, with a diviner's foresight, that to the beautiful and good that which is neither good nor evil is friendly. And my reasons for divining this I will tell you. I conceive I recognise three distinct classes, good, evil, and, thirdly, that which is neither good nor evil. Do you allow this distinction?

I do.

Now that good is friendly with good, or evil with evil, or good with evil, we are hindered by our previous arguments from believing. It remains then that, if there be anything friendly

with anything, that which is neither good nor evil must be friendly either with the good or with that which resembles itself. For nothing, I am sure, can be friendly with evil.

True.

But neither can like be friendly with like; this we also said, did we not?

We did.

That then which is neither good nor evil will not be friendly with that which resembles itself.

Clearly not.

It follows then, I conceive, that friendship can only exist between good and that which is neither evil nor good.

217 Necessarily, as it appears.

What think you then, my children, I proceeded to say; is our present position guiding us in a right direction? If we look attentively, we perceive that a body which is in health has no need whatever of the medical art or of any assistance; for it is sufficient in itself. And therefore no one in health is friendly with a physician on account of his health.

Just so, he replied.

But the sick man *is*, I imagine, on account of his sickness.

Undoubtedly.

Sickness, you will allow, is an evil; the art of medicine both useful and good.

Yes.

But a body, if I mistake not, in so far as it is a body, is neither good nor evil.

Exactly.

A body though is compelled, on account of sickness, to embrace and love the medical art.

I think so.

That then which is neither evil nor good becomes friendly with good, on account of the presence of evil.

Apparently.

But evidently it becomes so, before it is itself made evil by the evil which it contains; for, once become evil, it can no longer, you will allow, be desirous of or friendly with good; for evil, we said, cannot possibly be friendly with good.

No, it cannot possibly.

Now mark what I say. I say that some things are themselves such as that which is present with them, some things are not such. For example, if you dye a substance with any colour, the colour which is dyed in is present, I imagine, with the substance which is dyed.

To be sure it is.

After the process then, is the dyed substance such, in point of colour, as that which is applied?

I don't understand, he said.

But you will thus, said I. If any one were to dye your locks of gold with white-lead, would they, after the dyeing, be, or appear, white?

Appear.

And yet whiteness would, at any rate, be present with them.

True.

But still they would not, as yet, be at all the more white on that account; but though whiteness is present with them, they are neither white nor black.

Precisely.

But when, my dear Lysis, old age has brought upon them this same colour, then they become really such as that which is present with them, white by the presence of white.

Yes, indeed they do.

This then is the question I want to ask. If a thing be present in a substance, will the substance be such as that which is present with it: or will it be such, if the thing is present under certain conditions; under certain conditions, not?

The latter rather, said he.

That then which is neither evil nor good is, in some cases, when evil is present with it, not evil as yet; in other cases it has already become such.

Exactly.

Well then, said I, when it is not evil as yet, though evil be present with it, this very presence of evil makes it desirous of good; but the presence which makes it evil deprives it, at the same time, of its desire and friendship for
218 good. For it is no longer a thing neither evil nor good, but already evil; and evil, we said, cannot be friendly with good.

True, it cannot be.

On the same ground then we may further

assert, that those who are already wise are no longer friends to wisdom, be they gods, or be they men; nor, again, are those friends to wisdom who are so possessed of foolishness as to be evil; for no evil and ignorant man is a friend to wisdom. There remain then those who possess indeed this evil, the evil of foolishness, but who are not, as yet, in consequence of it, foolish or ignorant, but still understand that they do not know the things they do not know. And thus, you see, it is those who are neither good nor evil, as yet, that are friends to wisdom (philosophers), but those who are evil are not friends; nor again are the good. For that contrary is not friendly with contrary, nor like with like, was made apparent in the former part of our discourse. Do you remember?

Oh perfectly, they both cried.

Now then, Lysis and Menexenus, I continued, we have, as it appears, discovered, beyond a dispute, what it is that is friendly, and not friendly. Whether in respect of the soul, or of the body, or of anything else whatsoever, that, we pronounce, which is neither evil nor good is friendly with good on account of the presence of evil. To this conclusion they both yielded a hearty and entire assent.

For myself, I was rejoicing, with all a hunter's delight, at just grasping the prey I had been so long in chase of, when presently there came into my mind, from what quarter I cannot tell, the strangest sort of suspicion. It was, that the conclusions to which we had arrived were

not true; and, sorely discomfited, I cried, Alack-a-day, Lysis, alack, Menexenus; we have, I fear me, but dreamed our treasure.

Why so? said Menexenus.

I am afraid, I answered, that, just as if with lying men, we have fallen in with some such false reasonings in our search after friendship.

How do you mean? he asked.

Look here, said I. If a man be a friend, is he a friend to some one, or not?

To some one, of course.

For the sake of nothing, and on account of nothing, or for the sake and on account of something?

For the sake and on account of something.

Is that thing a friend, or loved, for the sake of which he is a friend to his friend, or is it neither friend nor foe?

I don't quite follow, he said.

No wonder, said I; but perhaps you will if we take this course; and I too, I think, shall better understand what I am saying. The sick man, as we just now said, is a friend of the physician. Is he not?

He is.

On account of sickness, for the sake of health?

Yes.

Sickness is an evil?

Beyond a doubt.

But what is health? I asked; a good, an evil, or neither one nor the other?

A good, he replied.

We further stated, I think, that the body, 219
a thing neither good nor evil, is, on account of sickness,—that is to say, on account of an evil, —a friend of the medical art. And the medical art is a good; and it is for the sake of health that the medical art has acquired this friendship; and health is a good, is it not?

It is.

Is health a friend, or not a friend? loved, I mean, or not loved?

A friend.

And sickness a foe?

Most decidedly.

That then it appears, which is neither good nor evil, is a friend of a good on account of an evil which is a foe, for the sake of a good which is a friend?

So it seems.

The friend then is a friend for the sake of that which is a friend, on account of that which is a foe?

Apparently.

Very well, said I. But arrived as we are, I added, at this point, let us pay all heed, my children, that we be not misled. That friend is become friend to friend, that is to say, that like is become friend to like, which we declared to be impossible, is a matter I will allow to pass; but there is another point which we must attentively consider, in order that we may not be deceived by our present position. The medical art, we said, is a friend, or loved thing, for the sake of health.

We did.

Is health a friend too?

To be sure it is.

For the sake of something?

Yes.

For the sake of something then which is a friend, if this too is to follow our previous admission?

Certainly. But will not that something too be a friend for the sake of some other thing which is a friend?

Yes.

Can we possibly help then being weary of going on in this manner; and is it not necessary that we advance at once to a beginning, which will not again refer us to friend upon friend, but arrive at that which in the first instance is a friend, or loved, and for the sake of which we say that all the rest are loved?

It is necessary, he answered.

This, then, is what I say we must consider, in order that all those other things, which we said were loved, for the sake of that one thing, may not, like so many shadows of it, lead us into error, but that we may establish that thing as the first, which is really and truly loved. For let us view the matter thus: If a man sets a high value upon a thing; for instance, if, as is frequently the case, a father prizes a son above everything else he has in the world, may such a father be led by the extreme regard he has for his son, to set a high value upon other things also? Suppose, for

example, he were to hear of his having drunk some hemlock; would he set a high value on wine, if he believed that wine would cure his son?

Of course he would.

And on the vessel also which contained the wine?

Certainly.

Do you mean to say, then, that he sets an equal value on both, on a cup of earthenware and his own son, on his own son and a quart of wine? Or is the truth rather thus? all such value as this is set not on those things which are procured for the sake of another thing, but on that for the sake of which all such things are 220
procured. We often talk, I do not deny, about setting a high value on gold and silver; but is the truth on this account at all the more thus? No, what we value supremely is that, whatever it may be found to be, for the sake of which gold, and all other subsidiaries, are procured. Shall we not say so?

Unquestionably.

And does not the same reasoning hold with regard to friendship? When we say we are friends to things for the sake of a thing which is a friend to us, do we not clearly use a term with regard to them which belongs to another? And does not that only seem to be really a friend in which all these so-called friendships terminate?

Yes, he said, this would appear to be the truth.

Therefore that which is really a friend, or loved, is not loved for the sake of another loved thing.

Clearly not.

This point then we dismiss as sufficiently proved. But to proceed, is good a friend?

I imagine so.

And good is loved on account of evil, and the case stands thus. If, of the three classes that we just now distinguished, good, evil, and that which is neither evil nor good, two only were to be left to us, but evil were to be removed out of our path, and were never again to come in contact either with body or soul, or any other of these things, which in themselves we say are neither good nor evil, would it not come to pass that good would no longer be useful to us, but have become useless? for if there were nothing any more to hurt us, we should have no need whatever of any assistance. And thus you see it would then be made apparent that it was only on account of evil that we felt regard and affection for good, as we considered good to be a medicine for evil, and evil to be a disease; but where there is no disease, there is, we are aware, no need of medicine. This, then, it appears, is the nature of good; it is loved on account of evil by us who are intermediate between evil and good; but in itself, and for itself, it is of no use.

Yes, he said, such would seem to be the case.

It follows then, I think, that that final friend

of ours, in which terminated all the other things which we said were friends for the sake of another friend, bears to those things no resemblance at all. For these things are called friends for the sake of a friend,—but our true friend appears to be of a nature exactly the reverse of this; for it was found to be our friend for the sake of an enemy: but, if the enemy were removed, no longer, as it seems, do we possess a friend.

Apparently not, said he, according at least to our present position.

But tell me this, said I. If evil be extinguished, will it no longer be possible to feel hunger or thirst, or any similar desire? or will 221
hunger exist, as long as man and the whole animal creation exists, but exist without being hurtful? And will thirst too and all other desires exist, but not be evil, inasmuch as evil is extinct?

It is ridiculous though to ask what will exist or not exist in such a case; for who can know? but this at any rate we do know, that even at present it is possible for a man to be injured by the sensation of hunger, and possible for him also to be profited. Is it not?

Certainly it is.

And so, too, a man who feels thirst, or any similar desire, may feel it in some cases with profit to himself, in other cases with hurt, and in other cases again, with neither one nor the other.

Assuredly he may.

Well, if evil is being extinguished, is there any reason in the world for things that are not evil to be extinguished with it?

None whatever.

There will exist then those desires which are neither evil nor good, even if evil be extinct.

Clearly.

Is it possible for a man who is desirous and enamoured not to love that of which he is desirous and enamoured?

I think not.

There will exist then, it appears, even if evil be extinct, certain things which are friends, or loved.

Yes, there will.

But if evil were the cause of a thing being loved, it would not be possible, when evil was extinct, for anything to be loved by anything; for if a cause be extinct, surely it is no longer possible for that to exist of which it was the cause.

True, it is not.

But above we agreed that the friend loved something, and on account of something, and at the same time we were of opinion, that it was on account of evil, that that, which is neither good nor evil, loved the good.

So we were.

But now, it appears, we have discovered some other cause of loving and being loved.

So it does.

Is it true then, as we were just now saying, that desire is the cause of friendship, and that

whatever desires is friendly to that which it desires, and friendly at the time of its feeling the desire; and was all that, which we previously said about being friendly, mere idle talk, put together after the fashion of a lengthy poem?

I am afraid it was, he replied.

But that, I continued, which feels desire, feels desire for that of which it is in want. Does it not?

Yes.

And that which is in want is a friend of that of which it is in want.

I imagine so.

And becomes in want of that which is taken from it?

Of course.

That then which belongs to a man is found, it seems, Lysis and Menexenus, to be the object of his love, and friendship, and desire.

They both assented.

If then you two are friends to one another, by some tie of nature you belong to each other?

To be sure we do, they cried together.

And so in general, said I, if one man, my children, is desirous and enamoured of another, he can never have conceived his desire, or love, 222
or friendship, without in some way belonging, or being akin, to the object of his love, either in his soul, or in some quality of his soul, or in disposition, or in form.

I quite believe you, cried Menexenus; but Lysis said not a word.

Well then, I continued, that which by nature belongs to us it has been found necessary for us to love.

So it appears, said Menexenus.

It cannot possibly be then, but that a true and genuine lover is loved in return by the object of his love. To this conclusion Lysis and Menexenus nodded a sort of reluctant assent, while Hippothales in his rapture kept changing from colour to colour.

I, however, with a view of reconsidering the subject, proceeded to say, Well, if there is a difference between that which belongs to us and that which is like, we are now, I conceive, in a condition to say what is meant by a friend; but if they happen to be the same, it's no such easy matter to get rid of our former assertion, that like was useless to like, in so far as it was like; for to admit ourselves friendly with that which is useless, were outrageous. What say you then, said I, since we are, as it were, intoxicated by our talk, to our allowing that there is a difference between that which belongs and that which is like?

Let us do so by all means, he replied.

Shall we further say, that good belongs to every one, and that to every one evil is a stranger; or rather, that good belongs to good, evil to evil, and that which is neither evil nor good, to that which is of the same nature?

They both agreed that the latter was their opinion in each particular.

It appears then, said I, that we have fallen

again into positions with regard to friendship, which we previously rejected. For, according to our present admission, the unjust will be no less friendly to the unjust, and the evil no less friendly to the evil, than the good to the good.

So it would appear, said he.

And again, said I, if we assert, that what is good, and what belongs to us, are one and the same, will it not result that none are friendly with the good but the good? And this too, I think, is a position in which we imagined that we proved ourselves wrong. Don't you remember?

Oh yes, they both cried.

What other way then is left us of treating the subject? Clearly none. I therefore, like our clever pleaders at the bar, request you to reckon up all that I have said. If neither those who love or are loved, neither the like nor the unlike, nor the good, nor those who belong to us, nor any other of all the suppositions which we passed in review—they are so numerous that I can remember no more—if, I say, not one of them is the object of friendship I no longer know what I am to say.

With this confession, I was just on the point of rousing to my aid one of the elders of our party, when all of a sudden, like beings of another world, there came down upon us the attendants of Menexenus and Lysis, holding their brothers by the hand, and calling out to the young gentlemen to come home, as it was

already late. At first, both we and the by-standers were for driving them off; but finding that they did not mind us at all, but grumbled at us in sad Greek, and persisted in calling the boys; fancying moreover that from having tippled at the feast they would prove awkward people to deal with, we owned ourselves vanquished, and broke up the party.

However, just as they were leaving, I managed to call out, Well, Lysis and Menexenus, we have made ourselves rather ridiculous to-day, I, an old man, and you, children. For our hearers here will carry away the report, that though we conceive ourselves to be friends with each other—you see I class myself with you—we have not as yet been able to discover what we mean by a friend.

PROTAGORAS

SUMMARY OF THE PROTAGORAS

SOCRATES meets an acquaintance in the streets of 309
Athens, and tells him that he has just been talking with the great Sophist Protagoras. The acquaintance, much interested, begs for a detailed account of the conversation; and Socrates, nothing loth, begins.

This morning, he says, before it was light, our young 310
friend Hippocrates—so eager was he—came rushing into my house to tell me the grand news that Hippocrates was come to Athens, and to beg me to introduce him as a pupil to the great man, who was staying, he said, with Callias, the son of Hipponicus. I rose and went with him, but took occasion on the way to sift my young friend; to elicit from him what he wanted to become by taking lessons from Protagoras; and to warn him of the terrible risk he ran by committing his soul into the charge of a person, of whom he knew so little, as he did of this money-making stranger.

Thus talking we arrived at the house; and there we 315
found Protagoras parading in a portico, accompanied by Callias our host, the sons of Pericles, and a few other distinguished men, and followed in his walk by a train of worshippers. In other parts of the house were Hippias of Elis, and Prodicus of Ceos, each with an admiring coterie; and just after us Alcibiades came in with Critias, the son of Callæschrus. But soon we all gathered into one room, and formed a sort of divan round Protagoras.

I began by introducing Hippocrates. 'And please 318

tell us,' I added, 'what you will make of him?' Protagoras replied, 'A better man.'—'No doubt; but in what will he be better?'—'He will be better able to manage his own affairs and those of the State.'—'You profess then as a Sophist,' I said, 'to make him a good citizen?'—'Precisely so,' he replied. 'A glorious profession truly,' I rejoined; 'but can such virtue be taught? For my part, I doubt; firstly, because the State allows men, who have never been taught politics, to give advice on public affairs, though it would never allow a man, who knew nothing of carpentering, to give advice on the same; secondly, because our best citizens, as Pericles for instance, have not been able to impart their virtues to their children.'

320 To these objections Protagoras replied at some length, 'I will begin,' he said, 'with the story of Prometheus and Epimetheus on the origin of man. Prometheus, as you know, distributed the arts of life among men, giving skill in each only to a favoured few. But these arts not proving sufficient to keep men alive in their struggle with wild beasts and with each other, Zeus afterwards sent Hermes to them with Justice and the Sense of Shame, ordering him not to impart them to a few only, but to spread them broadcast among men. For without a portion of these, he said, in the heart of every man, human society cannot hold together. And so strongly is this felt now that, while a man is thought a madman for professing skill on the flute if he cannot play the flute, he is equally thought a madman for professing to be unjust, though he really be so. This then is my answer to your objection, that only professionals are allowed to speak with authority on the arts; whereas all men, be they tinkers or cobblers, are invited to discuss a question of political virtue.

323 'Secondly. That virtue can be taught is shown by the very idea of punishment. We punish that we may make the criminal better, and deter others from crime. What is this but teaching virtue?

324 'Thirdly. You object that good men don't teach their sons to be good. But, though the teaching may not be successful, the sons most assuredly are taught. From

the very moment they are born they are taught virtue by some one, by mother or nurse, by tutor or father; and when they are sent to school, nothing is held of so much account as good conduct; and when they have left school, the State takes them in hand, and leads them by its laws on the same lines. It is true that they don't always turn out well; that good fathers, as you say, don't always have good sons. But that is the fault of nature rather than of teaching. If everybody learnt to play the flute, the sons of the best flute-players would not necessarily play the flute best, but those who had a natural taste for flute-playing. And so with political virtue at Athens. The most virtuous men will not necessarily be the sons of the most virtuous, but those who have the best natural disposition to virtue. Still the worst men among us—the most worthless demagogues of the day—will have more idea of virtue than the untaught savage who has never heard of virtue at all. No, Socrates, it is not true that virtue cannot be taught; it is not true that there are no teachers of virtue. On the contrary, we are all teachers. Only it so happens that I am rather better than most, and therefore can earn a higher fee.'

With these words the orator ceased, and I sat en- 328
chanted. Recovering myself, however, I congratulated him on the almost unique power he possessed, not only of making long speeches, but also of answering questions point by point. So I proceeded to try him with a question or two. 'Protagoras,' I said, 'you have spoken of virtue. Is virtue one or many? Are the several virtues parts of a whole, or different names of the same thing?'—'Parts of a whole,' he replied; 'much in the same way as the nose and mouth, for instance, are parts of the face. And they are unlike each other, much as the parts of the face are unlike each other.'—'But,' I asked, 'is it not the nature of justice to be just, and of holiness to be holy? If then justice and holiness are unlike each other, justice is unholy and holiness unjust.' Protagoras could not agree to this; and seeing he was vexed, I left this point, and went on to another.

332 'You said, I think, that the several virtues were distinct; wisdom, for instance, and discretion. Now, do you admit that each thing has only one opposite?'—'I do.'—'Well then, folly has wisdom for its opposite; but what of acting discreetly—is that foolish?'—'Certainly not.'—'Then discretion is opposite to folly?'—'Apparently.'—'Then folly, it seems, has her opposites, discretion and wisdom; but as one thing has only one opposite, it follows that discretion and wisdom are the same; and therefore you were mistaken in saying they were distinct.'

334 I was proceeding to make him admit that there was not much distinction either between justice and discretion: but our friend, nettled by the results of my questioning, branched off into a rhetorical display on the nature of Good, which the audience received with much applause. So, finding I could not keep him to the point, and pleading my inability to follow a long speech, I rose to depart; but was detained by our host, who was good enough to say that my going would spoil the party, but at the same time maintained that it was unreasonable in me to refuse to Protagoras the liberty which I claimed myself; namely, that each of us should speak as he liked.

On this Alcibiades rushed to my rescue, and others took part in the debate; Critias, in a few words, advising mutual concession; Prodicus making a sententious harangue, enlivened with his favourite verbal distinctions; and Hippias proposing an umpire. To this I demurred; but I was ready, I said, to answer any question that Protagoras might like to ask, if he in turn would answer me. And to this he reluctantly agreed.

339 'Socrates,' he began, 'I propose transferring our discussion on virtue to the region of Poetry. You know Simonides of Ceos. He says, if you remember, in one of his poems, "'Tis hard to become good." Is he correct in saying so?'—'Yes,' I replied.—'And yet he reproaches Pittacus with saying, "'Tis hard to be good." Surely in this there is some contradiction?' To meet this attack I called on Prodicus, a Cean himself, to come to the aid of his countryman; and, sup-

ported by him, I showed there was no contradiction, as there was a difference between being and becoming. And Pittacus would gladly have backed me up in other verbal refinements, as, for instance, on the meaning of the word 'hard,' only I offered instead to give my own notion of the real aim of Simonides in writing the poem ; a proposal which met with general assent.

So I began : 'Those great old philosophers, the 342
Lacedæmonians—for great philosophers they were and are, though the fact is not generally known—held pith and brevity to be the soul of philosophy. And it was in admiration of this Lacedæmonian model that the Seven Sages uttered their brief and memorable sayings ; among whom Pittacus of Mitylene won great fame by his contribution, "'Tis hard to be good." But Simonides, thinking that he would make a reputation at once by attacking and demolishing so venerable a dictum, wrote his entire poem against it, showing that Pittacus was wrong in using the word "be," for to the gods alone is it possible to *be* good. He ought instead to have said "become ;" as for a man to *become* good is hard indeed, but not impossible.'

When I had finished my exposition of the poem, 347
Hippias wished to favour us with one of his own ; but Alcibiades insisted that the original discussion should be resumed. So after begging Protagoras to drop the poets, who deserved, I said, no more than flute-girls to be admitted into the social intercourse of gentlemen and scholars ; and after complimenting Protagoras on his well-merited eminence as a teacher of wisdom, I went back to the former question, whether the virtues were one or many.

And in reply to this Protagoras seemed now to admit 349
that of the five virtues—wisdom, discretion, courage, justice, and holiness—four were pretty much alike ; but that the fifth, courage, was very different from the rest. 'But,' said I, 'are not the courageous daring? And are not men daring in that of which they have knowledge or wisdom, as diving, for instance, or riding, or shooting? And does not this show that courage and knowledge, or wisdom, are pretty nearly the same?'

This conclusion, however, he tried to evade by a fluent harangue on the distinction we should draw between courage and daring.

351 So I proceeded to approach him from another side. 'Is pleasure,' I asked, 'the only good, and pain the only evil?' He did not seem to consider this definition quite moral, but would rather say, with men in general, that some pleasures were good, and some pains evil. 'Let us look into the question,' I said, 'more closely, and perhaps this may help us to solve it. We have been speaking of knowledge. Do you agree too with men generally in thinking that knowledge is often overpowered by passion? or do you consider knowledge to be power?'—'Certainly I do,' he replied, 'and of all things the most powerful.'—'But this is not the common opinion,' I urged. 'It is generally thought that men, who know what is best, are yet often induced by pleasure or passion to act contrary to their knowledge. Such, indeed, is the opinion of the world; but it is not mine, nor, should I say, is it yours, Protagoras. You and I think—do we not?—that pleasure, so far as it pleases, is certainly good; it is only an evil, because it may end in pain. And pain, on the other hand, so far as it is painful, is certainly evil; it is only good because it may end in pleasure. Thus pleasure and good are really identical, and so are pain and evil. Only a measuring art is wanted to measure the exact results of an act. If in the long run the act produces more pleasure than pain, then it is good; if more pain than pleasure, then it is evil. And this measuring art is a sort of knowledge: and thus knowledge is found to be that which governs life, and ignorance to be the source of evil. And now let us apply this result of ours to courage. If it is only through ignorance of what is best that men choose the evil and refuse the good, then the reason why cowards refuse to go to war is simply because they form a wrong estimate, and the reason why the brave are ready to go to war is simply because they form a right estimate, of that which ought really to be feared. What then is courage but knowledge, and what is cowardice but ignorance? And thus the five virtues,

which you maintained at first to be different, are now seen to be only one.' And to this conclusion Protagoras could not but assent.

I then proceeded to notice the whimsical change of 361
front which had taken place in our controversy. 'You, Protagoras,' I said, 'maintained, and I denied, that virtue could be taught. But now I have shown that virtue is knowledge, which is of all things the most teachable; while you, Protagoras, have argued that virtue is not knowledge, which is almost the same as saying that it cannot be taught. Now, I cannot say that this is a satisfactory result, and should like, if you have no objection, to probe the matter more deeply.' But Protagoras, with a few kind words on my earnestness and skill in discussion, pleaded another engagement; and so our party broke up.

PROTAGORAS

SOCRATES AND FRIEND

Friend. Ha, Socrates, where do you appear from? though I can hardly doubt that it is from a chase after the fair Alcibiades. Well, I saw the man only the other day, and I can assure you I thought him looking still beautiful; though between ourselves, Socrates, he is a man by this time, and his chin is getting pretty well covered with beard.

Soc. And what of that? Sure you don't disapprove of Homer's assertion, 'that no age is so graceful as the beardling's prime.' And this is just the age of Alcibiades.

Fr. Be that as it may, Socrates, I want to know about matters now. Is it from him that you make your appearance, and how is the youth disposed towards you?

Soc. Very well, I think, and never better than to-day. For he has been taking my side, and saying a great deal in my favour. And in point of fact, I have only just left him. I have, however, something strange to tell you. Though he was in the room all the while, he was so far

from engrossing my attention, that I frequently forgot his existence altogether.

Fr. Why, whatever can have happened between you and him, to produce such an effect as this? You surely don't mean to say that you have met with any one more beautiful here in Athens?

Soc. Yes I do, much more beautiful.

Fr. More beautiful! a citizen or a foreigner?

Soc. A foreigner.

Fr. From what country?

Soc. Abdera.

Fr. And did this stranger really appear to you so beautiful a person, that you accounted him more beautiful than the son of Clinias?

Soc. Indeed he did. For how, my good friend, can the supremely wise fail of being accounted more beautiful?

Fr. Ho, ho, Socrates, you have just left one of our wise men, have you?

Soc. Say, rather, the wisest man of the present day, unless you would refuse this title to Protagoras.

Fr. Protagoras, do you say? is he in Athens?

Soc. He is, and has been here now two days.

Fr. And you are just come, I suppose, from
310 his company?

Soc. Yes, and from a very long conversation with him.

Fr. Oh pray repeat it to us then, unless you have something to hinder you. Just turn out this boy, and sit down in his place.

Soc. With all my heart; and I shall be much obliged to you for listening.

Fr. And I am sure we shall be so to you for speaking.

Soc. The obligation then will be mutual. I will therefore begin.

Last night, or rather very early this morning, Hippocrates, the son of Apollodorus, and brother of Phason, came and knocked very violently at my door with his stick; and, as soon as they opened to him, rushed into the house in the greatest haste, calling out with a loud voice, Socrates, are you awake or asleep? Recognising his voice, I said to myself, Ho, Hippocrates here; turning to him, Have you any news?

None but what is good, he answered.

So much the better, I rejoined. But what is the matter; what has made you come here so early?

Protagoras is arrived; said he, standing by my side.

Yes, the day before yesterday, I replied; have you only just heard it?

Only just, I assure you, only last night. While thus speaking, he felt about the bed on which I lay, and sitting down at my feet, continued, Only yesterday evening, on my return at a very late hour from Œnoe. For my slave Satyrus ran away; and I was just going to tell you that I meant to pursue him, when something else came into my head, and I forgot it. And when I came back, it was not till we had

supped and were going to bed, that my brother informed me of the arrival of Protagoras. Whereupon, late as it was, I started up with the intention of coming immediately to you, but on second thoughts it seemed too far gone in the night. As soon, however, as sleep released me after my fatigue, I rose up at once and hurried here.

On hearing this, being well acquainted with my friend's vehement and excitable nature, I said to him, Well, what does this matter to you? does Protagoras do you any harm?

Yes, that he does, said he with a laugh; he keeps his wisdom to himself, and does not make me wise.

But I have no doubt, said I, that if you only give him money enough, he will make you wise too.

I would, ye gods! he cried, it only depended on this; if it did, I would not spare the last farthing of my own fortune, or of my friends' either. But in point of fact, Socrates, the very object I have in coming here now is to ask you to speak to him on my behalf. For, to say nothing of my being so young, I have never even seen Protagoras in my life, or heard him speak; for I was quite a boy when he was here before. However, all the world applaud the
311 man, and say that he is wonderfully clever in discourse. So pray let us go to him at once, that we may find him in doors. He is staying, I am told, with Callias, the son of Hipponicus. Let us start.

Not yet, said I, it is too early. Rather let us turn into the court here, and walk about and talk, till it is light. And then we can go. For Protagoras seldom stirs out; so that you need not be afraid, we shall in all probability find him at home.

After this we rose up from the bed, and went out into the court. And while we were walking up and down, with a view of trying the strength of Hippocrates, I sifted him with the following questions. Hippocrates, said I, you are now proposing to call upon Protagoras, and pay him a sum of money as a fee for your attendance. Now tell me; in what capacity, on his part, do you mean to visit him, and what do you expect to become yourself by so doing? Take a similar case. If you had conceived the idea of going to your namesake Hippocrates of Cos, of the house of the Asclepiads, and paying him a sum of money as a fee for your tuition; and if you were to be asked what Hippocrates was, that you meant to pay him this money, what should you answer?

I should say, he replied, a physician.

And what do you expect to become?

A physician, he answered.

Again, if you had taken it into your head to go to Polyclitus of Argos or our Athenian Phidias, and pay them a fee for your tuition, and you were to be asked, what Polyclitus and Phidias were, that you intended to pay them this money, what should you reply?

Statuaries, of course.

And what do you expect to become yourself? A statuary, to be sure.

Well, said I, here are you and I now going to Protagoras; and when arrived there we shall be prepared to pay him a sum of money as a fee for your tuition. If our own funds prove adequate to his demand, so much the better; if they are deficient, we shall not hesitate to drain the purses of our friends. Now, suppose some man were to see us thus earnestly bent on the matter, and to say, My good friends, Socrates and Hippocrates, what do you mean to pay Protagoras as? Tell me, what would be our answer to this question? What distinct name is currently given to Protagoras, in the same way that the name of statuary is given to Phidias, and of poet to Homer? what analogous designation do we hear applied to Protagoras?

Well, there is no denying, he replied, that men do call our friend a sophist.

It is then, I suppose, as a sophist that we are going to pay him our monies.

Yes.

Now, suppose you were further asked, And
312 what do you expect to become yourself, that you go to Protagoras? At this he blushed. By this time there was just a glimpse of day, so that I could see his face. Why, said he, if this be at all like the two former cases, it is clear that I must expect to become a sophist.

And should not you, I solemnly asked, be

ashamed of showing yourself as a sophist in the eyes of Greece?

Yes, Socrates, I certainly should, if I must speak what I really think.

But possibly, Hippocrates, you are of opinion that the instructions to be afforded by Protagoras will not be given on this sort of principle, but rather resemble those you received from your masters in writing and music and gymnastics. For you were instructed in each of these latter professions, not with a view of becoming a craftsman therein yourself, but of obtaining the education which is deemed proper for an unprofessional gentleman.

Yes, Socrates, said he, I am quite of opinion that this is rather the character of Protagoras's instructions.

Are you aware then, I asked, what you are now about to do, or are you blind?

To what?

Blind to the fact, that you are about to consign your soul to the care of a man, who is, you say, a sophist, while what in the world such sophist is, you know not, or I am much surprised. And yet, if you know not this, neither do you know to what you are abandoning your soul, whether it be to a good or an evil thing.

I think I know, he answered.

Well, what do you think a sophist means?

I think, said he, as the name imports, that it means a man who is learned in wisdom.

Yes, said I, but as much may be said for

painters and architects; they also may be described as men learned in wisdom. But if we were asked, what the wisdom is in which painters are learned, we should doubtless say, In that which relates to the production of pictures. And so for the rest. But if we were to be further asked, What is the wisdom in which a sophist is learned? what is the production that he superintends? what would be our reply?

Why, what else should it be, Socrates, but that he superintends the production of an able speaker?

If so, said I, our answer might possibly be true, but certainly not sufficient. For it would draw on us the further inquiry, But what is the subject on which the sophist makes a man able to speak? The musician makes his pupil able to speak on the subject in which it makes him learned; in music, that is; does he not?

He does.

Well, said I, what is the subject on which the sophist makes a man able to speak? obviously on that in which he makes him learned, is it not?

One would expect so, at any rate.

What then, I proceeded, is that, in which the sophist is both learned himself, and makes his pupil learned also?

This, Socrates, I confess, I cannot tell you.

313 Young man, I rejoined, what are you doing? are you aware of the danger to which you are about to expose your soul? If you had had

occasion to entrust your body to any one's care, at the risk of its becoming either healthy or depraved, frequent would have been your deliberations on the propriety of the measure; you would have summoned both friends and relatives to a consultation, and taken many days to consider the matter; yet now, when your soul is concerned, your soul, which you prize far more highly than your body, and whereon your all depends for good or ill, according as it turns out healthy or depraved; when this, I say, is at stake, you communicate neither with your father, nor your brother, nor with any of us your friends; you ask none of us whether or no you ought to entrust your soul to this stranger who is come to Athens; but having heard of his arrival only last evening, as you tell me, you come here early in the morning, not to take thought or counsel on the matter, but prepared to spend both your own fortune and your friends', as if you had already made up your mind that, come what might, you must be the pupil of Protagoras; a man whom, as you admit, you are neither acquainted with, nor have even so much as spoken to in your life, but whom you call a sophist; while what this sophist is, to whom you are about to entrust yourself, you are plainly ignorant.

Yes, Socrates, said he; such would appear, from what you say, to be the case.

Hippocrates, I continued, is not a sophist a sort of merchant, or retail dealer, in the wares

upon which the soul subsists? for myself, I esteem him something of the kind.

And what does the soul subsist upon, Socrates? he asked.

Instruction, of course, I replied; and let us be careful, my dear friend, that the sophist does not impose upon us, by praising the quality of his wares, just as is done by those who traffic in food for the body, by the merchant, that is, and the tradesman. For these dealers are ignorant, if I mistake not, of the commodities which they supply; they cannot tell which article is good or bad for the body—though they praise them all alike in the sale—any more than their customers can, unless they happen to be versed in the gymnastic or medical art. And, exactly in the same way, those who hawk about their instructions from city to city, selling wholesale and retail to all who bid, are in the habit of praising their whole stock alike; yet some of these too, my good friend, may very likely be unable to tell us which of their wares is good, and which bad for the soul, while their customers will be equally ignorant, unless here again there chance to be among them some skilled in the medicine of the soul. If then you happen to be a judge of these matters, and can say which is good, and which is bad, there is no danger in your buying instructions from Protagoras, or any other person whatever; but if not, then have a care,
314 my good Hippocrates, that you do not stake and imperil your dearest treasure. For, I

can assure you, there is a far greater risk in the purchase of instruction than in that of food. When you buy meat and drink from the tradesman or merchant, you may carry them away in other vessels; and before admitting them into your body, by eating or drinking, you may lay them down in your house, and, calling in qualified advisers, consult what is fit to be eaten or drunk, and what to be rejected; what, moreover, is the proper quantity that may be taken, and what the proper time for taking it. So that in this purchase the danger is not great. But instruction you cannot possibly carry away in another vessel; as soon as you have paid down the price, you must of necessity receive the instruction in your soul itself; and when you have learnt it, go home a worse, or a better man. Let us, therefore, take advice on this question with our elders, for we are still too young to settle so great a matter. Since, however, we have started the plan, let us go and hear our sophist, and afterwards confer with others on what we have heard; for, beside Protagoras, we shall find there Hippias of Elis, and, I think, also Prodicus of Ceos, and many other learned professors.

This resolution taken, we set out on our expedition. When arrived at the porch, we stopped to discuss a question which had fallen out between us on the road, and which we wished to bring to a satisfactory conclusion before entering the house. Accordingly we stood talking in the porch till we had settled

the matter. Now the porter, an eunuch, must, I imagine, have overheard us; and I am inclined to think that, on account of the multitude of sophist-callers, he feels disgust for all who come to the house. At any rate, when we had knocked at the door, and he had opened it, and caught sight of us, Bah! he cried out, more sophists, I declare. My master's engaged. At the same time, with both his hands, he slammed the door in our faces, with all the will in the world. So we knocked again; but our friend, without opening, called out, Sirs, have you not heard that my master is engaged? But, good porter, I urged, we are neither come to call upon Callias, nor are we sophists; so cheer up. It is Protagoras that we want to see,—take in our names. At length, with the greatest difficulty, we prevailed on the fellow to open us the door.

On entering, we found Protagoras walking up and down one of the porticoes. And, in the same line with him, there walked on one
315 side Callias, the son of Hipponicus, and his half-brother Paralus, the son of Pericles, and Charmides, the son of Glaucon; on the other there was Pericles' other son, Xanthippus, and Philippides, the son of Philomelus; and, moreover, Antimœrus of Mende, who enjoys the greatest reputation of all Protagoras's pupils, and is taking lessons professionally, with the view of becoming a sophist himself. Behind these distinguished individuals there followed a

crowd of listeners, composed principally, as it appeared to me, of the foreigners whom Protagoras sweeps with him from the several cities he passes through, luring them, like an Orpheus, with his voice, and they follow at the sound, enchanted. There were, however, among them some of our own countrymen as well. On looking at this attendant band, I was particularly charmed to observe the excellent care they took never to get into the way of Protagoras. The moment the great master and his party turned, deftly and daintily did these gentlemen file off to the right and left, and, wheeling round, take their places, on each occasion, behind him, in the prettiest order.

Next after him my eyes observed, as Homer has it, Hippias of Elis, sitting in the opposite portico on a high chair; and on stools around him I remarked Eryximachus the son of Acumenus, Phædrus of Myrrhine, and Andron the son of Androtion, beside a number of foreigners from his own town of Elis and other cities. And they appeared to be plying him with questions on natural science, and especially on astronomy, while he, sitting aloft on his throne, was dispensing to them their several answers, and explaining all their difficulties.

There too, moreover, I beheld a Tantalus; for Prodicus of Ceos had lately come to Athens. Now this professor was established in a small room which Hipponicus had been in the habit of using as a store closet. On the present occasion, however, Callias has been forced, by

the influx of guests, to empty it of its contents and turn it into a spare bedchamber. Here then was Prodicus, still in bed, and wrapped up in what appeared to be a great quantity of sheepskins and blankets. On sofas near him were sitting Pausanias of Ceramis, and close by the side of Pausanias a young lad of a noble disposition, as far as I could judge, and certainly of a most beautiful form. I thought I heard his name was Agathon, and I should not be surprised if he turns out to be Pausanias's favourite. Beside this stripling there were the two Adimantuses, sons of Cepis and Leucolophides, and some others. But what they were talking about I was unable to catch from the outside, notwithstanding my intense anxiety to hear Prodicus,—so supremely, nay divinely, clever do I account the man;—for the
316 gruffness of his voice caused a kind of buzzing in the room, which rendered all he said indistinct. We had not been long in the house, when there came in after us Alcibiades the fair, as you call him with my full assent, and Critias the son of Callæschrus.

After we had spent a few minutes in noticing the particulars I have mentioned, we walked up to Protagoras, and I said, Protagoras, it is to see you that I and my friend Hippocrates here have called.

Would you like, said he, to speak with me alone, or before the rest?

To us, I replied, it makes no difference in the world; when you have heard our object in

coming, you can judge for yourself. Well, what is your object ? he asked.

Hippocrates, said I, presenting him, is a native of Athens, son of Apollodorus, of a great and wealthy house. For himself, he is considered in point of natural ability a fair match for the youth of his age : and he is desirous, I believe, of making a figure in the state, a result which he expects more readily to attain by attaching himself to you. Now then that you have heard our errand, consider whether it ought to be discussed between ourselves alone, or in public.

You do well, Socrates, he answered, to take these precautions in my behalf. When a stranger visits powerful cities, and in each of them calls upon the flower of the youth to abandon the society of their countrymen, both related and not related, both old and young, and attach themselves solely to him, in the hope of becoming better by such intercourse ; when he does this, I say, he cannot take too many precautions ; for his course is attended by no slight jealousy, by ill-will, moreover, and actual plots. Now the trade of sophist is, I maintain, of ancient date ; but its professors in ancient times were so afraid of this odium ever attaching to it, that they uniformly covered it with an assumed disguise. Some among them veiled it under poetry, as Homer, Hesiod, and Simonides ; others, again, under mystic rites and prophetic inspiration, like Orpheus, Musæus, and their followers. I have heard of

others putting forward even the gymnastic art, as a screen; Iccus of Tarentum, for instance, and that sophist of the present day, who is inferior to none of his contemporaries, Herodicus of Selymbria, and formerly of Megara. Music, again, was the cover assumed by your own countryman, Agathocles, a very eminent sophist, by Pythoclides of Ceos, and a number of others. Now it was, I repeat, for fear of becoming generally odious, that all these distinguished sophists shrouded their one trade beneath the veil of the several arts I have
317 mentioned. But I, for my part, differ from them all, so far as this concealment is concerned. For I conceive that they were very far from attaining the object they desired, inasmuch as their secret was discovered by men of authority in their respective states, that is to say, by the very men to deceive whom these disguises were assumed; since the vulgar herd may be said to perceive nothing at all of themselves, but merely to echo the opinions which the former promulgate. Now, whenever a man attempts to escape, and instead of succeeding is caught in the act, he is not only thought a great fool for his pains, but necessarily renders himself still more obnoxious than before: for men consider that such a person adds knavery to his other delinquencies. On such grounds, then, the course I have pursued has been exactly the opposite to this. I have ever avowed myself a sophist and a teacher of youth; and I esteem this precaution of mine

to be more effectual than theirs,—avowal, that is to say, I esteem safer than denial. Added to this, I have devised other precautions, so that, thanks be to Heaven, no harm has ever come to me from avowing my profession. Yet I have now been engaged in it many years, as may well be the case, considering the number I have lived altogether—so many that there is not one among you, whose father I am not old enough to be. I shall therefore consider it far more agreeable, if you do not object, to discuss your errand in the presence of all the inmates of the house. On hearing this, I at once suspected that he had a mind to parade us before Prodicus and Hippias, and make it appear that we had come as his ardent admirers. Accordingly I said, Why don't we then summon Prodicus and Hippias to come with their followers, and listen to our conversation?

Let us do so by all means, he replied.

What say you, suggested Callias, to our making a regular divan, so that you may talk sitting? His proposal being accepted, we all set to work with delight at the idea of listening to such clever men, and with our own hands seized on the stools and sofas, and ranged them in order by the side of Hippias, as the stools were already in his neighbourhood. Before we had finished, Callias and Alcibiades, who had gone to fetch Prodicus, returned with him and his coterie, having succeeded in getting the professor out of bed.

As soon as we had all taken our seats, Protagoras began. Now then, Socrates, said he, that these gentlemen have joined our party, you had better repeat what you mentioned to me a few minutes ago, with regard to this young man.

318 I open my account of our errand, said I, in the same way as I did before. I present to you my friend Hippocrates, who is possessed with a desire of becoming your disciple, and would be glad, he says, to hear what advantages he may expect to derive from your tuition. So much for our part of the business. In answer to this, Protagoras said to Hippocrates, My young friend, if you are to be my disciple, you will find that on the very day of your becoming such, you will go home a better man than you came; on the second day the result will be similar, and each succeeding day will be marked with the same gradual improvement.

But, Protagoras, I replied, there is nothing wonderful in this promise of yours; it is only what may naturally be expected. Since I am sure that even you yourself, advanced in years and wisdom as you are, could not fail of being improved by receiving information on a subject with which you might possibly chance to be unacquainted. No, this is not the sort of answer we want; but something of the following kind. Suppose our friend here were ere long to take a new fancy into his head, and conceive the desire of attaching himself to the

young painter, Zeuxippus of Heraclea, who has lately come to Athens, and were to make the same application to him, that he is now making to you, and were to hear from him in reply, exactly as he has heard from you, that each day of his attendance would be marked by fresh improvement and progress. If our youth, however, not content with this answer, were further to inquire, In what do you mean that I shall improve, and wherein shall I make progress? Zeuxippus would say, In painting. And so, if on applying to Orthagoras of Thebes, and hearing from him the same answer that he hears from you, he were to proceed to ask, what would be the particular point in which he would daily improve by his daily attendance? the flute-player would reply, In playing the flute. This then is the kind of answer I wish you to give to Hippocrates, and to me who am questioning you on his behalf.

If my friend here becomes a pupil of yours, Protagoras, he will go home on the first day of his attendance a better man than he came, and on each succeeding day he will make similar progress—to what, Protagoras? In what will he improve?

Socrates, he answered, your question is a fair one, and I delight in answering fair questions. If Hippocrates comes to me, he will not be served as he would be served if he were to attach himself to any other sophist. Sophists in general misuse their pupils sadly. Just escaped as the lads are from their school-

studies, these teachers drive them back again, sorely against their will, into the old routine, and give them lessons (while saying this, he glanced at Hippias) in arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, and music; whereas, if a youth comes to me, he will receive instruction on no other subject than that which he is come to learn. And what he will learn is this: such prudence in domestic concerns as will best enable him to regulate his own household; 319 such wisdom in public affairs as will best qualify him for becoming a statesman and orator.

I wonder, said I, whether I follow your meaning: I understand you to speak of the political art, and that you undertake to make men good citizens.

This is exactly the profession I do make, Socrates, he replied.

Glorious truly then, said I, is the art you possess, if so be that you do possess it; for to a man like you I will say nothing else than what I really think. Since for my part, Protagoras, I always imagined that this art was not capable of being taught, but when you say it is, I know not how to disbelieve you. My reasons, however, for believing that it cannot be taught, or communicated from man to man, I am bound to declare. I hold, as all Greece holds, that the Athenians are a wise people. Now, I observe in all our meetings in the assembly, that whenever there is occasion to transact any public business connected with

house-building, they invariably send for house-builders, to advise them on the matter; whenever connected with shipbuilding, for ship-builders; and the same practice is observed with regard to all the arts which they consider capable of being learnt and taught. But should any individual, whom they believe to be no member of the trade in question, obtrude his advice on the matter, be he ever so beautiful, or wealthy, or high-born, they do not a whit the more allow him a hearing on this account, but shower on him jeers and hisses, till our would-be speaker either gives way of himself to this storm of clamour, or is pulled down from the bema by the bowmen, and turned out of the house by command of the prytanes. Such then is the course they pursue with all business which they consider belongs to a craft. But whenever a matter connected with the public administration requires discussion, up starts any member who pleases, and proffers them his advice, no matter whether he be carpenter, smith, or shoemaker, merchant or skipper, rich or poor, high or low. And in this case no one thinks, as in the former, of objecting to the speaker, that without having received instruction from any quarter, without having any teacher to show, he yet presumes to offer advice; clearly, because they all believe that this knowledge is not capable of being taught. Nay, not only is public business conducted on this principle, but in private life we see our best and wisest citizens unable to

impart to others the excellence which themselves possess. Take, for example, Pericles, the father of these two young men. In all that a master could teach, he has educated
320 them liberally, and well; but in his own wisdom he neither instructs them himself, nor sends them anywhere else to be instructed; but, like oxen consecrated to the gods, they are left to roam and pasture at will, if haply somewhere or other they may light by good fortune on virtue. Do you wish another case? There is Clinias, the younger brother of our friend here, Alcibiades. His guardian, this same Pericles, for fear, as he said, of his being corrupted by Alcibiades, tore him from the society of the latter, and placed him in Ariphron's house to be educated. But he had not been there six months before Ariphron restored him to his guardian, as not being able to make anything of him. And so I could cite instance upon instance of men, who, good themselves, have been unable to render better either their own sons or other people's; and it is, Protagoras, from the observation of such instances as these that I have been led to the belief, that virtue is not a thing that can be taught. Now, however, that I hear you maintain the contrary, that belief is shaken, and I am inclined to think that there must be something in what you say; since I esteem you a man of vast experience, of extensive acquirements, and no inconsiderable invention. If therefore you are able to make it clear by demonstration,

that the nature of virtue admits of its being taught, do not grudge us, I beseech you, your proof.

No, Socrates, I will not, he replied. But say, should you prefer me, as beseems an elder when addressing his juniors, to convey my proof in the form of a mythical story, or to go through it step by step in a serious discussion? Many of the party calling out in reply, that he might do whichever he pleased, Well, said he, since you leave me the choice, I think it pleasanter to tell you a story.

There was once a time when, though gods were, mortal races were not. But when there came, by law of fate, a time for these too to be created, the gods fashioned them in the bowels of the earth, out of a mixture of earth and fire, and substances which combine the two. And when they were ready to bring them forth to the light, they charged Prometheus and Epimetheus with the office of equipping them, and dispensing to each of them suitable endowments. Epimetheus, however, entreated his brother to leave the distribution to him; and when I have completed my work, do you, says he, review it.

Having obtained his request, he began to distribute. To some he assigned strength without speed; others, that were weaker, he equipped with speed. Some he furnished with weapons; while for those whom he left weaponless, he devised some other endowment to save them. Animals, which he clad with puny

frames, were to find safety in the flight of their
321 wings, or subterranean retreats; those which he invested with size, were by this very size to be preserved. And so throughout the whole of the distribution he maintained the same equalising principle; his object in all these contrivances being to prevent any species from becoming extinct. Having thus supplied them with means of escaping mutual destruction, he proceeded to arm them against the seasons, by clothing them with thick furs and strong hides, proof against winter-frost and summer-heat, and fitted also to serve each of them, when seeking rest, as his own proper and native bed: and under the feet he furnished some with hoofs, others with hair and thick and bloodless skins. His next care was to provide them with different kinds of food: to one class he gave herbs of the field; to another, fruits of trees; to a third, roots; while a fourth he destined to live by making other animals their prey. Such, however, he allowed to multiply but slowly, while their victims he compensated with fecundity, thus ensuring preservation to the species. Forasmuch though as Epimetheus was not altogether wise, he unawares exhausted all the endowments at his command on the brute creation; so he still had left on his hands without provision the human family, and he knew not what to do.

While thus embarrassed, Prometheus came up to review his distribution, and found that, while other animals were in all points well

suited, man was left naked and barefoot, unbedded and unarmed. Yet now the fated day was close at hand, on which man too was to go forth from earth to light. Prometheus therefore, being sorely puzzled what means of safety to devise, steals in his extremity the inventive skill of Hephæstus and Athene, together with fire; for without fire it could neither be acquired, nor used by any; and presented them to the human race.

Thus man obtained the arts of life, but the art of polity he had not; for it was kept in the house of Zeus, and into the citadel, the dwelling of Zeus, Prometheus was not now allowed to enter; moreover, the watchmen of Zeus were terrible. But into the joint abode of Athene and Hephæstus, where they worked together at the craft they loved, he stole unnoticed, and purloining the fiery art of Hephæstus, and the other proper to Athene, 322
bestowed them on man; and hence man derives abundance for life. But Prometheus, for his brother's fault, was visited not long after, as the story goes, by the penalty of his theft.

Man being thus made partaker of a divine condition was in the first place, by reason of his relationship to God, the only animal that acknowledged gods, and attempted to erect to gods altars and statues. Secondly, by his art he soon articulated sounds and words, and devised for himself houses, and raiment, and shoes, and beds, and food out of the ground.

Thus furnished, men lived at first scattered

here and there, but cities there were none. So they fell a prey piecemeal to the beasts of the field, because wherever they met them they were weaker than they, and their mechanical art, though sufficient for their support, was found unequal to the war with beasts. For as yet they had not the art of polity, which comprises the art of war. So they sought to assemble together, and save their lives by founding cities. But often as they assembled they injured one another, for lack of the political art; so that again they dispersed, and again were perishing. Zeus therefore, fearing for our race that it would be quite destroyed, sent Hermes to take to men justice and shame, that they might be orderers of cities, and links to bring together friendship. Whereupon Hermes inquired of Zeus in what manner he was to present shame and justice to men. Am I to dispense them, he asked, in the same way that the arts have been dispensed? which have been dispensed on this wise: One man received the art of medicine for the use of many not physicians, and so with the other crafts. Is it thus that I am to distribute shame and justice among men, or bestow them on all alike? On all alike, said Zeus; let all partake, for cities cannot be formed, if only a few are to partake of them, as of other arts. Nay more, enact a law from me, that whosoever is incapable of partaking in shame and injustice, be put to death as a pest to a city.

Thus you see the reason, Socrates, why the

Athenians and others, when there is a question on excellence in carpentering, or any other manual art, conceive that few only are qualified to advise them; and why, if any one not of the number of the few, presumes to offer his counsel, they refuse him a hearing, as you assert; and refuse it justly, as I maintain. But whenever they come to a debate on political virtue, 323
which ought altogether to depend on justice and prudence, they listen with good reason to every speaker whatsoever, esteeming it every man's duty to partake of this virtue, if he partakes of no other, as otherwise no city can exist. This, Socrates, is the true reason of the fact. That you may not, however, fancy yourself imposed upon, but may understand that it is really the universal opinion, that all men have a share of justice and political virtue in general, receive this additional proof. In all other kinds of excellence, for instance, if a man professes himself skilled in playing the flute, or in any other art whatsoever, while in reality he is not so, he is pursued, as you observe, with either ridicule or indignation, and his relations come up and reprimand him as a madman. But in the case of justice and political virtue, albeit a man is known to be deficient in such virtue, yet if he tells the truth of himself before many hearers, this confession of the truth, which in the former case was considered good sense, is here looked upon as madness; and it is said that all men ought to profess to be just, whether they are so or not, and that he

who does not profess it is out of his senses ; it being necessary that every single person should in some degree partake of justice, if he is to live among men.

So much then to prove that on this particular virtue they with good reason allow every man to offer his advice, because they believe that every man has a share in it ; and further, that they consider it to be, not of natural or spontaneous growth, but that, wherever it exists, it is the result of teaching and study, I will next endeavour to demonstrate. If you take notice of all the evils which men believe their neighbours possess by the fault of nature or of fortune, you will observe that no one is angry with those who are thus afflicted ; no one takes them to task ; no one attempts to instruct or correct them with a view to their alteration for the better ; pity is the only feeling entertained. Who, for instance, is so unreasonable as to visit another with any of these modes of treatment for being ugly, or small, or sickly ? No one, clearly, because no one, I imagine, is ignorant that evils of this kind, as well as their opposite advantages, accrue to men either by nature or fortune. Look, on the other hand, at those merits which it is believed may be acquired by application, exercise, and instruction ; if a man, instead of possessing these merits, possesses the opposite vices, here, if I mistake not, is indignation excited, punishment inflicted, and reproof administered. Now of this kind injustice and

impiety are individual instances, while the entire opposite to political virtue composes 324
the class. And for this every man is angry with his neighbour, every man takes his neighbour to task, clearly because every man believes that it is acquired by education and habit. Nay, Socrates, if you will but observe the purport of punishment, it will itself teach you that in the opinion of the world, at any rate, virtue is a thing capable of being acquired. No one when punishing a criminal directs his thought to the fact, or punishes him for the fact, of his having committed the crime, unless he be pursuing his victim with the blind vengeance of a reasonless brute. No, he that would punish with reason, punishes not on account of the past offence—for what has been done he surely cannot undo—but for the sake of the future, in order that the offender himself, and all who have witnessed his punishment, may be prevented from offending hereafter. And if he conceives such a notion as this, he also conceives the notion that virtue may be taught; at any rate he punishes with a view of deterring from vice. This, therefore, is the opinion entertained by all who inflict punishment, either in a private or public capacity. Now, punishment and correction are inflicted by all the world on those whom they believe to be guilty, and by none more than by your own citizens, the Athenians; so that, by this reasoning, the Athenians also are in the number of those who consider that virtue may be acquired and taught. That your

countrymen then have good reason for listening to the advice of a smith or a shoemaker on political affairs, and that in *their* opinion virtue is a thing susceptible of being taught and acquired, has been proved to you, Socrates, with arguments which, for my part, I consider convincing.

There still remains, however, a difficulty which puzzles you. You ask how it is that good fathers instruct their children in all knowledge that depends upon teachers, and make them wise therein, but in the virtue wherein they are good themselves they make them no better than others. In answering this question, Socrates, I shall address you no more in fable, but in serious argument. And let us view the matter thus. Is there not some one thing of which all members of a state must partake, if a state it is to be? for here, if anywhere, shall we find the solution of your difficulty. For if such a thing there be, and if this single thing be neither the art of the carpenter, nor of the brazier, nor of the potter, but justice and discretion and holiness, and, in
325 a word, that which I call compendiously a man's virtue; if this be a thing of which all must partake, and with which every lesson must be learnt, and every deed done, without which no lesson learnt and no deed done; if all who do not partake of it must be instructed and corrected, be they men, or women, or children, until by such treatment they are improved; while those who refuse to hearken to the voice of correction and instruction are to be

expelled from their country, or put to death as incurable :—if all this be true, and in spite of this being true, virtuous men have their children instructed in all other knowledge, but fail to have them instructed in this, just think what extraordinary people you make of your virtuous men. For we have proved that as individuals and statesmen they believe virtue to be the fruit of education and culture ; and, with this belief on their part, is it possible to suppose that they instruct their sons in knowledge where death is not the punishment of ignorance, but that in the knowledge of that, wherein if they fail to instruct their children, they entail upon them the penalty of death, and of exile, and beside death the confiscation of their goods ; and, in a word, the utter ruin of their house ;—is it possible, I say, to suppose that in the knowledge of this, that is, in the knowledge of virtue, they do not instruct their children and bestow thereon all their care? Surely we must believe they do. Yes, Socrates, from infancy upwards they instruct and admonish them as long as they live. The moment that a child understands what is said to him, the one point contended for by nurse, and mother, and governor, and the father himself, is the progress of their charge in virtue ; from everything that is said and done they take occasion to tell and explain to him, that such a thing is just, and such another unjust, that this conduct is honourable, and that disgraceful, that one deed is holy, and another impious ; this you

must do, they say, and that you must not do. If the child yield a willing obedience, all is well; if not, they treat him like a young tree that is twisted and bent, and try to straighten him with threats and blows. After this, they send him to school, with a strict charge to the master to pay far greater heed to the good behaviour of the children than to their progress in reading and music. And the master does make this his principal care, and as soon as his boys have learned their letters, and are in a condition to understand what is written, as before what was spoken, he sets before them on their benches the works of good poets to read, and compels them to learn them by heart, choosing such poems as contain moral admo-
326 nitions, and many a narrative interwoven with praise and panegyric on the worthies of old, in order that the boy may admire, and emulate, and strive to become such himself. And exactly on a similar principle the study of the music-master is to produce sobriety of character, and deter the young from the commission of evil; and further, when he has taught them to play, *he* again instructs them in the works of other good poets, selecting lyric poems for their use, which he sets to his music, and compels the minds of his pupils to be familiarised with measure and harmony, to the end that their natures may be softened, and that, by becoming more sensible to time and tune, they may be better qualified to speak and to act. For the life of man in all its stages requires

modulation and harmonising. Nay more, they send them to gymnastic schools, in order that by an increase of bodily strength they may be better able to serve their virtuous minds, and not be compelled by physical infirmity to shrink from their post in war and other emergencies. Such is the course of education adopted by those fathers who are best able to follow it, that is to say, by the wealthiest citizens; and their sons are the first to go to school, and the last to leave it. And as soon as they are released from school, the state on its part constrains them to learn its laws, and live by them as by a model, that they may not follow the random bent of their own inclinations. And exactly as writing-masters under-rule lines with their pen for such pupils as are still awkward at writing, before they give them their writing lesson, and oblige them to follow in their writing the direction of the lines; so too does the state mark out a line of laws, the discoveries of good and ancient lawgivers, which it forces its members to be guided by, as well in exercising as in obeying authority, while it visits with punishment all who transgress the line; and the name given to this punishment, both here and in other places, is correction, under the notion that justice directs. So great then being the attention paid to virtue both by states and individuals, do you wonder, Socrates, and doubt if virtue is capable of being taught? You ought not to wonder at that, but much rather, if it were not capable.

How does it happen then, that virtuous fathers have frequently unworthy sons? Hear the reason; for neither in this is there anything to wonder at, if it be true, as I previously remarked, that virtue is a pursuit wherein no
327 member of a state, if it is to be a state, must be altogether uninitiated. For if what I say be true, as most incontestably it is, consider the case by selecting in the way of example some other pursuit and subject of instruction. Suppose, for instance, that it were impossible for a state to exist without all its members being flute-players in a greater or less degree, according to their several capacities; suppose that all both publicly and privately were taught to play, and reproached if they played ill, and that no one envied another this attainment, just as under existing circumstances no one either envies a man his justice and his obedience to law, or affects to conceal his own, as he does his other accomplishments—for each of us, I imagine, finds his own interest in his neighbour's justice and virtue, and therefore all are eager to tell and teach to all the dictates of justice and law. Suppose, I repeat, that in the art of playing the flute we were all ready to instruct one another with the same zeal and freedom from jealousy; do you imagine, Socrates, that the sons of superior flute-players would be at all more likely to turn out superior performers than the sons of inferior players? I think they would not; but any man's son who chanced to be born with a genius for

flute-playing would rise to distinction, and if the genius were wanting, so would be the distinction; and often would it happen that a skilful player would be followed by an unskilful son, and an unskilful father by a skilful son. But still I feel sure that all would be competent players by the side of those, who did not make flute-playing their business or their study. This then is the light in which I wish you to view our present condition. Select the individual whom you consider the most deficient in justice of all who have been trained in law and society, and you will find him not only just, but a perfect master in justice, when compared with men who have neither training, nor tribunal, nor laws, nor any necessity ever compelling them to cultivate virtue; but who are in fact savages, like the wild men represented on the stage last year by the poet Pherecrates at the Lenæan festival. I am confident that, if you were thrown among such men as those, like the misanthropical chorus in the play, you would be only too happy to fall in with a Eurybates or a Phrynondas, and would mourn with tears of regret for the villainy of your worst citizens here. But now you are fastidious, Socrates, and because all men are teachers of virtue to the best of their several abilities, you believe that it is taught by none. Again, if you were to search in Athens for a teacher of Greek, you would not find a single one; and equally unsuccessful, I imagine, would you be 328
if you were to look for a master competent to

instruct the sons of our mechanics in the very trade which they have each learnt from their father, as well as their father and his fellow-craftsmen were able to teach it. No, Socrates, if you wanted a teacher for such proficients as these, it would be no easy matter to discover one; but if for boys quite ignorant of the trade, you would find one with no trouble at all. And similar is the difficulty with respect to virtue and all those other qualities. But if there be any among us ever so little more capable than others of advancing men on the road to virtue, you may be well content. Now of this number I conceive that I am one; and I flatter myself that far above all other men do I understand the art of making a virtuous gentleman, and that my lessons are well worth the price I demand, ay and a still larger one, so much so that even the pupil himself allows it. And therefore the plan I have adopted in asking my terms is this. As soon as a pupil has finished his course, he pays me, if willing, the full amount of my demand; if not, he goes to an altar, and there he makes on oath his own estimate of the value of my instructions, and pays me accordingly.

Such are my proofs, Socrates, both in fable and serious argument, in favour of the propositions, that virtue is capable of being taught, and that it is such in the opinion of the Athenians, and that there is nothing surprising in good fathers having bad sons, or in bad fathers having good sons; since to take from the

various professions one case out of many, the sons of Polyclitus, the companions of our friends here, Paralus and Xanthippus, are nothing in comparison with their father. But of Paralus and Xanthippus it is not as yet fair to predicate this; for their youth allows us to hope.

After this lengthened and varied display Protagoras ceased to speak. And for a long while I sat enchanted, with my eyes still fixed on him, in the expectation of his saying something more, and in my eagerness to hear it. At last, when I perceived that he had really finished, I with some difficulty recovered myself, and turning to Hippocrates said, How thankful I am to you, son of Apollodorus, for having induced me to come hither—so high a privilege do I account it to have heard what I have heard from Protagoras. For heretofore I was of opinion that there was no method of human culture by which the virtuous acquired their virtue; but now I am persuaded there is. Only one slight difficulty remains in my mind, which I am sure that Protagoras will easily elucidate, since he has elucidated so much. For if you were to apply to any of our public 329
men for an explanation of these very matters, to Pericles, for instance, or some other able speaker, you might possibly hear from them as fine a speech as has just been delivered; but if you were to proceed with your interrogations, you would find them like books, unable either to give you an answer, or to ask any question

themselves; but if you start ever so slight an inquiry with respect to any remark they have made, exactly in the way that a vessel of brass, when struck, rings loud, and continues to ring, unless you stop it by laying on your finger, so do these orators respond to the shortest question with an harangue of inordinate length. But not so our Protagoras. He is not only equal, as the fact proves, to the delivery of long and beautiful speeches, but he is also able to return a short answer to a short question; and, when questioner in his turn, he can wait till he has received his answer—gifts these of rare attainment. Now therefore, Protagoras, as I only want one slight explanation to be entirely satisfied, I trust to you for answering me this: You assert that virtue is susceptible of being taught, and if there be a man in the world on whose word I would believe it, I believe it on yours. But there was one thing that puzzled me, as you were speaking, and on this pray satisfy my mind. You said that Zeus sent justice and shame as a present to men; and again, in several places in your discourse, you spoke of justice, and discretion, and holiness, and similar qualities, as making all together one thing, which you called virtue. This, then, is the point that I wish to be accurately explained. Is virtue one thing, and are justice, discretion, holiness, parts of it, or are all these but so many names of one and the same thing? This is what I still want to know.

Well, Socrates, he said, if this be all, I shall have no difficulty in answering you. These qualities of which you ask are all parts of one thing, of virtue.

But are they parts, I asked, like the parts of a face, like the mouth, nose, ears, and eyes; or, like the parts of gold, do they exactly resemble one another and the whole, except in being greater or smaller?

Like the former, I consider, Socrates. They bear the same relation to virtue that the parts of a face bear to the entire face.

How then, said I, are these parts of virtue distributed among men? Do some men have one, and some another; or, if a man has received one, must he of necessity have all?

Certainly not, Socrates. Many men are courageous without being just, many are just without being wise.

Then these too are parts of virtue, said I, 330
wisdom and courage.

Most assuredly they are, said he. Why, wisdom is chief of all the parts.

And every one of these parts is different from every other. Is it not so? I asked.

It is, he replied.

And every one of them has a distinct function, like the parts of a face? An eye, you know, is not like an ear, nor is its function the same; and so of the other parts, there is not one like any other, either in function or in anything else. Is it the same then with the parts of virtue? do they all differ from one another,

at once in themselves and their functions? Is it not clear though, that such must be the case, at least, if we are to keep to our comparison?

Well, Socrates, it is the case.

If so, I continued, there are none of the other parts of virtue like wisdom, or like justice, or like courage, or like discretion, or like holiness.

None, he said.

Come then, said I, let us examine together into the character of each of these parts. And, first, of justice. Is justice a thing, or not a thing? For my part, I believe it to be a thing. But what do you?

I believe so, too.

To proceed. If a man were to say to you and me, Protagoras and Socrates, be good enough to tell me whether this *thing*, as you have just called it, this justice, is, in itself, just or unjust? I should answer, Just; but what would be your decision? The same as mine, or different?

The same, he replied.

The nature then of justice is to be just, I should say, if he were to ask me the question. Should you?

I should.

And if he were to proceed to inquire whether we believed in the existence of holiness as well, we should doubtless assent.

True, he answered.

And if he were to ask whether we called this a thing also, we should assent again.

So we should.

But if he were further to inquire whether we considered the nature of this thing to be holy, or unholy, I, for my part, should be indignant at the question, and should reply, Hush, my good sir; it were hard for anything else to be holy, if holiness itself were not holy. And you, should not you answer thus?

Most certainly I should.

If however to these questions he were to add the following, But what was it, my good friends, that you said a little time ago? Did I not hear you aright? I fancied you said that the parts of virtue were so disposed among themselves, as to bear no resemblance one to another. To this I should reply, For the rest you heard aright; but when you thought that I too made this remark, your hearing deceived you. No, 331
this was Protagoras's answer to a question of mine. On hearing this, if he were to turn to you, and say, Protagoras, does Socrates speak the truth? do you maintain that the different parts of virtue are all unlike each other? was this assertion yours? what would be your reply?

I should be forced to allow that it was, said he.

After this admission, Protagoras, what would be our answer, if he were to proceed thus? It appears then, that it is not the nature of holiness to be a just thing, nor of justice to be a holy thing; but, rather, of holiness to be a thing that is not just, and of justice to be a

thing that is not holy; that is to say, holiness is an unjust thing, and justice an unholy thing. Well, what is to be our answer? On my own account I should reply, that, as for myself, I believed justice to be holy, and holiness just; and on yours, too, I should be glad, if you would allow me, to make the same answer; at any rate, to say that justice and holiness, if not exactly the same, resembled each other as nearly as possible; and that nothing was so like holiness as justice, or like justice as holiness. Determine then, whether you would forbid me to make this reply, or whether your opinion coincides with mine.

I certainly do not think, Socrates, that it is so unconditionally true, as to demand my unqualified assent, that justice is holy, and holiness just. There appears to me to be a difference between them. But what matters that? If you wish it, I am quite ready to allow that holiness is just, and justice holy.

Pardon me, said I. It is not at all my object to examine into an 'If you wish it,' or an 'If you think so;' but into what you think, and what I think: that is to say, I consider that our argument will be most successfully investigated by putting 'ifs' altogether out of the question.

Well, Socrates, said he, there is no doubt that justice and holiness are somewhat alike; for there are no two things in the world that do not, in some point of view, resemble one another. There *are* points of resemblance between black

and white, hard and soft, and other qualities which are believed to be most diametrically opposed to each other. In fact, those very parts which we said just now had different functions and different natures—the parts, that is, of the face—do, in certain respects, resemble one another. So that, in this way, you might go on to prove, if you chose, that all things are alike. But it is not fair to call things like, because they have some point of resemblance; nor unlike, because they have some point of dissimilarity, if, in either case, the point be a very small one.

To this I replied with wonder, Do you mean to say then, that, in your opinion, the relation between justice and holiness is that of the faintest resemblance?

I don't quite say this, he replied; but neither, on the other hand, am I inclined to take your 332
view of the matter.

Well, said I, since this question seems to put you out of humour, let us allow it to pass; and from the other things you said select the following for consideration.

Is there a thing you call folly?

There is.

And is not the direct contrary of this thing wisdom?

I think so.

When men act correctly and beneficially, are they discreet, think you, in so acting; or would they be, if they were to act in the opposite manner?

Discreet in so acting.

Are they not discreet by virtue of discretion?

Of course they are.

And do not those, who do not act correctly, act foolishly, and show themselves not discreet in so acting?

He assented.

It appears then that acting foolishly is the contrary to acting discreetly.

It does, he said.

Is it not true, I asked, that what is done foolishly is done through folly, and what is done discreetly, through discretion?

To this he agreed.

And that if a thing be done through strength, it is done strongly; if through weakness, weakly?

Yes, he answered.

And if with quickness, quickly; and if with slowness, slowly?

True.

And, in short, that if anything is done in such and such wise, it is done by virtue of the corresponding quality; and if contrariwise, by the contrary quality?

Granted.

To proceed, said I, Is there such a thing as beauty?

There is.

And has it any contrary except deformity?

None.

Again, is there such a thing as good?

Yes.

Has it any contrary except evil?

No.

Once more, is there such a thing as high in sound?

There is, he said.

And is there any contrary to it except low?

Not any.

Has every single thing then only one contrary, and not many?

Only one, I admit.

Come then, said I, let us reckon up our admissions. We have admitted that each thing has one contrary, and no more, have we not?

We have.

And that whatever is done contrariwise, is done by virtue of contraries?

Yes.

And that whatever is done foolishly, is done contrariwise to that which is done discreetly?

Granted.

And that what is done discreetly, is done through discretion; what foolishly, through folly?

Agreed.

Well, if they be done contrariwise, they must be done through contraries, must they not?

They must.

And the one is done through discretion, the other through folly, is it not?

Just so.

Contrariwise?

Of course.

Through contraries then?

Yes.

It follows then that folly is contrary to discretion?

Clearly.

Do you remember though our agreeing before that folly was contrary to wisdom?

I do.

And that one thing had only one contrary?

Yes.

Well then, said I, which of our two assertions
333 are we to retract, Protagoras? the one which maintains that one thing has only one contrary, or that, in which it was stated that wisdom and discretion were distinct, both being parts of virtue, and not only distinct but unlike, both in nature and function, just as the parts of the face are unlike? Which of the two, I repeat, are we to retract? for when set side by side these two statements do not present a very musical appearance, as they neither accord nor harmonise with one another. For how can they possibly accord, if on the one hand it is necessary that one thing have only one contrary and no more, and on the other it appears that folly, which is one thing, has wisdom for a contrary and likewise discretion? I state the case correctly, do I not, Protagoras?

He confessed that I did, though sorely against his will.

Might it not be then, said I, that wisdom and discretion are one and the same thing? Just as before we found that justice and holi-

ness were pretty nearly the same. But come now, Protagoras, I added, let us not be faint-hearted, but examine the rest. If a man commits injustice, does he appear to you to be discreet in committing it?

I, for my part, Socrates, should be ashamed to avow this; there are many though who do.

Shall I maintain then my argument with them or with you? I asked.

If you like, said he, address yourself to this statement first, the statement of the many.

Well, it makes no difference to me, I said, if you will only answer whether this be your own opinion or not. For it is the statement itself that I am bent on sifting, though it may possibly happen that we are at the same time sifted ourselves — I in asking, and you in answering.

With this proposal Protagoras at first coquetted. The subject is so awkward, he pleaded. At last, however, he agreed to answer.

Come then, said I, answer me from the beginning. Do people appear to you to be discreet when committing injustice?

Be it so, he replied.

By their being discreet, do you mean that they are well advised?

I do.

And by their being well advised, that they take good counsel in committing injustice?

Granted.

Is this the case if they fare well in committing it, or if they fare ill?

If they fare well.

Do you say then that there are certain good things?

I do.

Are those things good which are advantageous to mankind?

Yes, and there are things, I can tell you, that I call good, though they be not advantageous to mankind. And by this time Protagoras seemed to be fairly exasperated and sorely fretted, and to be stedfastly set against answering any more. So, seeing him in this state, I was cautious, and asked him softly,
334 Will you tell me, Protagoras, whether you speak of things which are advantageous to no man, or of things which in no respect whatever are advantageous? Is it the latter sort that you call good?

By no means, he answered. I know of many things which are disadvantageous to men, meats, and drinks, and drugs, and a thousand other things, and of things too which are advantageous. There are things also which to men are neither the one nor the other, though they are to horses, or to oxen, or to dogs; while there are other things again which are neither good nor bad for any animal, but only for trees. And here again there is a distinction; some things are good for the roots, but bad for the branches. Dung, for instance, is a capital thing for the roots of all plants when laid at the roots, but if you choose to lay it on the branches and young

shoots, you destroy the tree. Then again there is oil, which is very bad for all plants, and most destructive to the hair of every animal but man, while to man it is of service not only for his hair, but also for the rest of his body. Nay, so varied and multifarious a thing is good, that even this very thing of which we are speaking is good for external application, but the worst thing in the world to be taken internally. And for this reason medical men make a point of forbidding their patients the use of oil, save only of the smallest possible quantity in what they are going to eat, of just enough, in fact, to drown the disagreeableness in their viands and seasonings which impresses itself on their organs of smell.

This harangue was received by the party present with clamorous approval. For myself, I said, Protagoras, it is my misfortune to be a forgetful sort of person, and if a man makes me a long speech, I forget what it is all about. Just then as, if I had chanced to be short of hearing, you would have considered it necessary, if intending to converse with me, to speak louder than you do to other people; so now, since I happen to be short of memory, you must curtail me your answers, and make them briefer, if you mean me to keep up with you.

In what sense do you bid me make them briefer? he asked. Are they to be briefer than is proper?

Oh dear no, I replied.

Are they to be the proper length?

Precisely, I said.

Pray then must I answer you at the length which I consider proper, or which you consider proper?

Protagoras, I answered, I have certainly heard that you both possess yourself the gift, and can teach it to others, of speaking, if you choose, on any given subject at such a length, that your speech never comes to an end, and then again on the same subject so concisely that no one expresses himself in fewer words. If therefore you intend to converse with me, I
335 must request you to adopt your latter style, your brevity.

Socrates, he answered, I in my time have entered the lists of argument with many men, and had I been in the habit of doing as you recommend, of talking, that is, as my antagonist bade me talk, I should be still a mere nobody, and the name of Protagoras would never have been heard in Greece.

Then I, knowing that he had not pleased himself with his former answers, and that he would not consent if he could help it to go on answering, and feeling in consequence that it was no longer my business to be present at the meeting, addressed him thus: I can assure you, Protagoras, that I for my part am not desirous of carrying on our conversation in a way that you dislike, but as soon as you like to talk in such a manner that I can keep pace with you, I shall then be happy to converse. For you, as fame says, and you say yourself,

are capable of conducting a discourse in a style both of brevity and prolixity—for you are a clever man; but I have not the gift for these long speeches, albeit I should have liked well to possess it. It was your place therefore, as master of both styles, to have given me the choice, that so we might have managed a conversation. But now since you refuse to do so, and I have an engagement, and could not wait while you launched out into long orations—being required elsewhere—I will take myself off; otherwise I might possibly have heard even long speeches from you not unpleasantly.

With these words I rose to depart. And as I was rising, Callias seized my hand with his right, and with his left laid hold of my cloak, saying, We won't let you go, Socrates; for if you leave us, we shall find our conversation no longer the same thing. I beg, therefore, that you will remain with us; for I know nothing that I would more gladly hear than a discussion between you and Protagoras. So pray oblige us all. To this I replied, having already risen to leave the house, Son of Hipponicus, charmed as I always am with your philosophic spirit, I now love and admire it more than ever. So that it would give me great pleasure to comply with your request, if it were but feasible. But now it's just as if you were to ask me to keep up with a runner in his prime, like Crison of Himera; or to compete in speed with one of our long-distance runners or couriers. Were

336 you to ask me to do this, I should reply, You cannot be so anxious for me, as I am for myself, to keep up with such runners as these; but as I cannot, I do not try. No, if you want to see me and Crison running together, you must ask him to come down to my level; for he can manage a slow pace, though I cannot a fast. And so in the present matter, if you are desirous of hearing Protagoras and me, you must request him to answer, as he did at first, briefly, and to the question. Otherwise, what is to be the plan of our conversation? for my part, I always thought there was a distinction between conversing and haranguing.

But you see, Socrates, said he, Protagoras's proposal is only just; he demands for himself permission to converse as he pleases, and leaves the same liberty to you.

That's not fair, Callias, broke in Alcibiades. My friend Socrates here confesses that he has no notion of making long speeches, and yields the palm therein to Protagoras; but, in the power of conversing, and knowing how to give and answer a question, I should be surprised if he finds his master anywhere. If therefore, Protagoras, on his side, admits that he is a worse hand than Socrates at conversing, Socrates is content; but if he professes to be his match, let him maintain the conversation with question and answer, and not launch out into a long harangue, whenever a question is proposed, for the purpose of eluding his opponent's arguments; and, instead of render-

ing a simple answer, protracting his speech to such a length, that most of the hearers forget what the question was about; though, as for Socrates himself, I'll be bound that he will not forget, for all his joking and pretending to have a bad memory. I therefore (as every one of us ought to declare his opinion) maintain that Socrates's proposal is the fairer of the two.

After Alcibiades, it was Critias, if I remember right, who spoke. Prodicus and Hippias, he said, Callias appears to me to be very much on the side of Protagoras; and Alcibiades, as usual, is a vehement partisan, whatever side he takes. It is our business, however, to side neither with Socrates nor Protagoras; but impartially request of them both not to break up our meeting in the middle.

Critias having thus spoken, Prodicus began. 337
Very well said, Critias, in my opinion. It *is* the duty of all who are present in a conversation of this kind, to regard both sides with impartiality, but not with equality. For I conceive there is a difference. To both we should give an impartial hearing; but not reward both with an equal meed: but the cleverer of the two with a greater, and the less clever with a less. I therefore, in my turn, Protagoras and Socrates, request of you both to make concessions; and in considering the question, to debate, if you will, but not to wrangle; for friends debate with friends, just out of friendship, but those only wrangle who are at

variance and feud with one another. And thus your conversation will be best for us all. For, on the one hand, you, the speakers, will by this means be most likely to obtain from us, the hearers, approbation, and not praise—for approbation is felt in the mind of the listener, and there is no deception in it; but praises are often bestowed by those who falsify with their lips the belief of their hearts: and we, on the other hand, the hearers, shall thus be most likely to feel delight, not pleasure—for a man feels delight in learning, and in partaking of wisdom in his mind; but pleasure in eating, and experiencing any other agreeable sensation merely in the body.

Thus spake Prodicus, and was very generally applauded; and after Prodicus, Hippias the learned took up the word. My friends who are here present, he began, I regard you all as of one kin and family and country by nature, though not by law: for like is akin to like by nature; but law, which lords it over men, does frequently violence to nature. It were a shame then in us to know the nature of things, to be the wisest men of Greece, and in this very character to have now met together in that city of Greece which is the home and altar of Grecian wisdom, and in that city's greatest and wealthiest house, and yet to exhibit no result worthy of this our rank, but, like the lowest of mankind, to quarrel with one another. It is at once therefore my entreaty and my advice to you, Protagoras and Socrates, that you

will allow us as arbiters to mediate between you; and do not you, Socrates, insist upon 338
this your strict method of talking, which admits only of the extremest brevity, if such a method is disagreeable to Protagoras, but allow yourself more liberty, and give the rein to your words, in order that they may appear before us with greater majesty and grace; and for you, Protagoras, do not stretch every rope, spread every sail, and, losing sight of land, run before the wind into your ocean of words; but see both of you whether you cannot cut out some middle course between you. Such then is the plan you should adopt, and, if you take my advice, you will elect an umpire, and a chairman, and a president, who will take care that neither of you transgress on either side the bounds of moderation.

This proposal pleased the party, and, all approving it, Callias repeated that he would not let me go, and I was requested to name a president. To which I replied, that it would be unworthy of us to select an umpire for our conversation. If, I urged, the object of our choice is found to be our inferior, it cannot be well for such a person to preside over his betters; nor can it be well if he turn out to be an equal, for being himself no better than we are, his acts will be no better either; so that our election will prove to have been superfluous. But you will appoint, you say, a superior to the post. To tell you the truth, I do not believe that it is in your power to elect a wiser man than Protagoras;

but if you appoint one who is not superior, though you maintain he is, Protagoras is still exposed to the indignity of having a president set over him like a common man. For myself, I say nothing—it makes no difference to me. But I will tell you what I will do to gratify your desire for the continuance of our meeting and conversation. If Protagoras does not like answering, let him take the questioning part, and I will answer, and in doing so will endeavour to show the sort of answers that, in my opinion, ought to be given. And as soon as I have answered all the questions he may choose to propose, let him in turn answer mine in a similar manner. And should he still evince an unwillingness to keep to the question in his answers, I will then join with you all in entreating him, as you are now entreating me, not to destroy our party. And so there will be no need for a single president to be appointed; you will all discharge the office jointly. This plan of mine being universally sanctioned, Protagoras was compelled, though with a very bad grace, to agree to begin by asking questions; and when he had asked enough, to give brief answers in his turn to any question of mine. He commenced then pretty nearly thus:

In my opinion, Socrates, one of the most important elements in a gentleman's education is a critical knowledge of poetry, and by this I understand the capacity of distinguishing be-
339 tween such passages in the poets as are correctly and incorrectly composed, and the power

of discussing them scientifically, and giving reasons when questioned about them. Accordingly, the question which I now have to propose, though it will relate to the subject which you and I are at present discussing, that is to say, to virtue, shall be transferred to the region of poetry. This shall be the only difference. If I remember right, Simonides says to Scopas, son of Creon the Thessalian, No doubt to become a good man truly is hard, a man in hand and foot and heart four square, wrought to a faultless work. Do you know the ode, or shall I give it you entire?

Not the slightest occasion, thank you, I replied. I not only know the piece, but have studied it with considerable attention.

I am glad to hear it, he returned. Pray then do you consider it a beautiful and correct composition?

Certainly I do, very beautiful and correct.

And do you think it beautiful if the poet contradicts himself?

Certainly not, said I.

Look at it closer then, said he.

You are very good, I answered; but I have looked at it close enough.

Are you aware then, he continued, that in the course of the poem he proceeds, if I mistake not, to say, Ill do I accord with that word of Pittacus, though it fell from the lips of a sage, 'Tis hard to be good.' You observe, that it is the same person who makes both this remark and the former one.

I do, I answered.

And do you think them consistent with each other?

I must confess I do, I replied. At the same time, though, I was sorely frightened, lest there should be something in what he said. However I continued, But perhaps you don't.

Why how, said he, can I possibly think a writer consistent with himself who makes both these assertions? who in the first place premises in his own person, that it is hard truly to become a good man, and yet, before he has advanced any distance in his poem, is so oblivious as to find fault with Pittacus for saying, as he had said himself, that it is hard to be good, and declares that he cannot admit such an assertion, though it is exactly the same as his own. Surely it is evident that in finding fault with a man, who says only what he has said himself, he finds fault with himself as well; so that in the first passage or the second he is clearly wrong.

These remarks drew from many of the hearers clapping and applause. For myself, at first, just as if a blow had been dealt me by a skilful boxer, I was blinded and made giddy at once by the speech of my antagonist, and the plaudits of his supporters. At last, with a view (to confess to you the truth) of gaining time to consider the sense of the poet, I turned to Prodicus, and calling out to him, said;

340 Prodicus, sure Simonides is a countryman of yours. You are bound to come to his aid.

And in thus inviting your assistance, I can fancy myself using the words of Scamander to Simois, when beset by Achilles; for according to Homer he summons him thus:

> Come, brother, hasten; let us both unite
> To quell a mortal's too presumptuous might.

And so I now call upon you to join me in saving our friend Simonides from being demolished by Protagoras. And I can assure you, the defence requires all that exquisite art of yours, whereby you prove that to wish and to desire are not the same, and which supplied you with those numerous and delicate distinctions which you just now established. And now consider whether your opinion agrees with mine. Mine is, that Simonides does not contradict himself in this matter; but, before I support it, I wish you to publish yours.

Do you conceive that becoming and being are identical or different?

Different, to be sure, said Prodicus.

And did not Simonides in the first passage declare his own opinion, that to become a good man truly is hard?

He did, was the reply.

And afterwards he condemns Pittacus,—not, as Protagoras supposes, for making the same assertion that he had made himself, but for a different one. For Pittacus does not make, like Simonides, the difficulty to consist in becoming good, but in being good. And let me tell you, Protagoras, on the authority of

Prodicus, that being and becoming are not the same. And if being is not the same with becoming, Simonides does not contradict himself. And I should not wonder if Prodicus and many others of the party were to bring forward Hesiod to prove, that no doubt to become good is hard; for in front of virtue, he says, the gods have placed sweat; but when you are come to the top, for all its being so hard, it is easy to possess.

As soon as I had finished, Prodicus complimented me, but Protagoras rejoined:

Your amendment, Socrates, involves a greater error than what you would amend.

If so, I replied, my work has been unfeatly done, and I am a sorry sort of physician; in attempting to cure I augment the disease.

Well it is so, Socrates, he said.

How do you mean? I asked.

Why, said he, it would argue great folly in the poet, if he really maintained that virtue was so common a thing to possess, when in the universal opinion of mankind it is the hardest thing of all.

How very luckily it happens, said I, that Prodicus is present at our conversation. For you must know, Protagoras, I apprehend that
341 the art of Prodicus was in old time of a godlike sort, and commenced either with Simonides, or at some still more ancient date. But you, though acquainted with a great many things, are apparently not acquainted with this; whereas I on the contrary am, thanks to the

teaching of Prodicus. And so in the present instance you appear to me not to be aware that this very word *hard* was possibly not understood by Simonides in the sense in which you understand it, but that he was like our friend here, who is constantly taking me to task on the meaning of the word δεινός (terrible, also sharp, clever). For whenever, in lauding you or any other distinguished person, I say of the object of my panegyric, that he is a terrible clever man, Prodicus asks me whether I am not ashamed of myself, for calling good things terrible? Whatever is terrible, says he, is evil; at any rate, no one ever thinks of talking of terrible wealth, or terrible peace, or terrible good health; but men do talk of terrible sickness, and terrible war, and terrible poverty; thereby implying, that whatever is terrible is evil. And so perhaps too the Ceans, with Simonides at their head, conceive what is hard to be evil, or give it some other signification with which you are not acquainted. But what says Prodicus to the question? for he is the person to apply to about Simonides's language. What did Simonides mean, Prodicus, by the word hard?

Evil, said he.

This then, I suppose, is the reason why he finds fault with Pittacus for saying, 'Tis hard to be good,' just as if he had heard him say, that it was evil to be good.

Why what else, Socrates, do you suppose that Simonides does mean? This of course;

and he makes it a reproach to Pittacus that he did not know how to distinguish rightly the meaning of words, as being a Lesbian, and reared in a barbarous dialect.

You hear, Protagoras, what Prodicus says. Have you any answer to make?

You are altogether wrong, Prodicus, he answered. I am confident that Simonides meant by hard, just as we all do, not what is evil, but that which, instead of being easy, is done with a great deal of trouble.

Well, to tell you the truth, Protagoras, I said, I agree with you. I believe Simonides did mean this, and what is more, Prodicus knows he did; only he is bantering you, and thinks to try whether you are able to back your own assertions. Since a very strong proof, that, at any rate, Simonides did not understand hard to be evil, is afforded by his very next remark. For he says, that God alone can possess this boon; and I am sure that, if he had meant to say that it was evil to be good, he could not have at once added, that none but God can possess good, and have assigned this as a special attribute to the deity. Were this the case, Prodicus would call his countryman an impious profligate, and no true son of Ceos. But what appears to me to be in this poem the intention of Simonides throughout, I am willing
342 to tell you, if you would like, Protagoras, to have a sample of my capacity for the criticism of poetry that you talk about. To this proposal Protagoras answered, Exactly as you

please, Socrates; but Prodicus, Hippias, and the rest, pressed me strongly to begin.

Well then, said I, I will endeavour thoroughly to explain to you the view which I, for my part, take of the poem.

In no countries of Greece is philosophy of higher antiquity, or more generally prevalent, than in Crete and Lacedæmon, and nowhere in the world are sophists more numerous than there. But the inhabitants of these countries deny the fact, and, like those sophists of whom Protagoras told us, affect an unlearned exterior, in order that their superiority in Greece may not be discovered to consist in wisdom, but be thought to depend upon their valour in war, as they imagine that, if the secret of their ascendency were known, it would at once be universally practised. As it is, however, they have so skilfully concealed it, that they have taken in all the would-be Spartans in other states; and, accordingly, you may see these gentlemen getting their ears battered in their ardent emulation, encircling their arms with the straps of the cestus, toiling in the palæstra, and wearing brief cloaks, under the impression, doubtless, that these are the practices to which the Spartans owe their supremacy in Greece. But the Lacedæmonians, wishing to enjoy the society of their native sophists without restraint, and getting wearied of having to meet them in secret, made a clearance by alien-acts of these foreign imitators, and all other strangers in their country, and thenceforward lived in in-

tercourse with their sophists, without foreigners being aware of the fact. And, further, they allow none of their own youth to visit other cities, for fear of their there unlearning the lessons they have learnt at home—a practice which is observed by the Cretans as well. Nay, not only are there men in these countries who pique themselves on their erudition, but women also share their zeal. Now, that my statement is correct, and that the Lacedæmonians are admirably trained in philosophy and the art of words, may be discovered from the following fact. If you converse with the most ordinary Spartan, you find him for a long while in the conversation appearing an ordinary sort of person; but just wait for an opportunity to present itself, and he will shoot at you, like a skilful archer, a notable saying of terse and pointed brevity, so that you, his antagonist, will show no better than a child by his side. And it was observing this very fact which led certain men, in times both past and present, to believe that the Spartan idiosyncrasy consisted rather in a devotion to wisdom than gymnastics, as they were aware that the capacity for uttering pithy sentences of this sort implied in its possessor a finished education.
343 Of this number were Thales of Miletus, Pittacus of Mytilene, Bias the Prienian, Solon among ourselves, Cleobulus of Lindus, Myson of Chene, and the Lacedæmonian Chilon, who was reckoned to make up the seven. All these sages were admirers and lovers and disciples of

the Spartan system, and easily may you discover their wisdom to have been after the Spartan model, by the brief and memorable sayings that were uttered by each. Nay more, when they met together to dedicate the choice offering of their wisdom to Apollo, in his temple at Delphi, they inscribed thereon, in their joint capacity, those famous sayings, which are, you know, on everybody's lips, Know thyself, and, Nothing in extremes.

What is my object, you will ask, in saying this? It is to show, that among the ancients philosophy was couched in a style of Laconic pith and brevity. A particular instance of which is afforded by this very saying of Pittacus, 'Tis hard to be good;' which, being received with applause by the learned, was passed in private circles from mouth to mouth. Simonides then, being a man ambitious of philosophic distinction, felt sure that if he were to succeed in overturning this famous dictum, he would, like a novice who had defeated a champion wrestler, establish himself a reputation among the men of his day. It was in opposition then to this current saying, and with this ambitious view in thus seeking to suppress it, that he composed the entire ode, according to my view of the matter.

Let us now then all unite in examining the piece, to see whether my view be a correct one. To begin, the very commencement would appear to be insane, if the author wished simply to state the fact that it was hard to be

good; for he inserts the words 'no doubt,' which seem to be inserted with no object in the world, unless we conceive him engaged in a sort of quarrel with the saying of Pittacus; and that, when Pittacus asserts that it is hard to be good, Simonides contradicts him and says, 'It is not so, but to become a good man is hard, Pittacus, in very truth.' Mind, he does not say, 'truly good;' it is not to good that he applies the word 'truly,' as though he thought that some things were truly good, and others good indeed, but not good truly. No, this would be silly, and not like Simonides. But we must make a transposition of the word 'truly,' and presuppose that the two remarks were made in something like the following manner. Pittacus enunciates thus, Mortals, it
344 is hard to be good; and Simonides replies, You are wrong, Pittacus; 'be' is not the word, but no doubt to become a good man, in hand and word and thought complete, wrought to a faultless work, is hard in very truth. Thus you see we find a reason for inserting 'no doubt,' and the word 'truly' seems to be correctly placed at the end of the sentence. And that this is here the sense of the poet, is attested by all the remainder of the poem. For were I to review each passage in it separately, I could abundantly prove it to be a perfect composition; for it is all very charming and elaborate. As, however, it would be too long a matter to analyse it thus, I will content myself with making it clear by a general sketch

that the scope of the entire poem is nothing more or less, from beginning to end, than a refutation of Pittacus's dictum.

For after a brief interval the poet proceeds to assert, just as he would do if maintaining an argument, that though no doubt to become a 'good man is truly hard, yet for a certain time at least it is possible; but when become so, to remain in this condition, and be, as you say, Pittacus, a good man, is altogether impossible, and more than human. God alone may possess this boon; 'But for man, he cannot possibly be other than evil, whom helpless misfortune prostrates.' Who is it then that helpless misfortune prostrates in the command of a ship? Clearly not the landsman; for the landsman is always prostrate. Just then, as you cannot throw down a man who is on the ground, but he must be on his legs before you can so throw him as to lay him on the ground; exactly in the same way a man must be possessed of help and resource before he can be prostrated by helpless misfortune, while the man who is ever without help can never possibly be prostrated. A violent storm may overtake the pilot, and make him helpless; a severe season may surprise the farmer, and make him helpless; and so may the physician be made helpless by an analogous professional calamity. For the good man is capable of becoming evil, as is attested by another poet, who says,

The good are sometimes evil, sometimes good;

but the evil man cannot possibly become, but

must of necessity ever be, evil. Thus it appears then, that whenever a helpful, a wise, and a virtuous man is prostrated by helpless misfortune, he cannot possibly be other than evil. But, you say, Pittacus, it is hard to be good; no, the truth is, that to become good no doubt is hard, yet possible; but to be good is impossible quite. For, as the poet continues, 'Every man is good by faring well, and evil by faring ill.' What then is faring well with regard to letters? and what makes a man
345 good in letters? Clearly the learning of letters. And what kind of faring well makes a good physician? Clearly the learning of the treatment of the sick. 'And evil,' he says, 'by faring ill.' Who then is capable of becoming an evil physician? Clearly the man who starts with being in the first instance a physician, and in the second a good physician. For *he* can also become a bad physician. But we who are unprofessional cannot possibly become, by faring ill, either physicians, or carpenters, or anything of the kind; and whosoever cannot become a physician by faring ill, obviously cannot become an evil physician either. Thus you see it is only the good man that can ever become evil, whether he become so by decay, or pain, or disease, or any other casualty—for this alone is evil faring, to lose one's knowledge—but the evil man can never become evil, for he is alway evil; if he would fain become evil, he must first become good. So that this part of the poem also tends to prove

that it is not possible to be a good man in the sense of continuing good, but to become good is possible, just as it is to become evil. And they, adds the poet, are best for the longest time whom the gods love.

And if it be plain that these passages are directed against Pittacus, the aim of the poet in the following is still more clearly marked. For thus he proceeds: 'Wherefore never will I, in quest of that which cannot be, throw away a part of life on empty bootless hope; in quest, I say, of an all-blameless man among us, who feed on the fruits of the wide-bosomed earth. When I find one, I will let you know.' So vehemently and uniformly throughout the poem does he persist in attacking that expression of Pittacus. 'But all I praise and love willingly who do naught vile—with necessity not even gods contend.' And this again is directed to the same point. For Simonides was not so ill-informed as to express his admiration of those who committed no evil willingly, as though he imagined there were any in the world who did commit evil willingly. I had almost said, that no wise man ever entertained the opinion, that any mortal errs willingly, or commits base and wicked actions willingly. On the contrary, wise men well know that all who do base and evil deeds, do them involuntarily. And so Simonides, as a wise man, does not profess himself an admirer of those who do not commit evil willingly; but he predicates the willingness of

himself. For he conceived it to be frequently the duty of a good and noble man to force himself to become the friend and admirer of
346 others—for instance, when a man is unfortunate enough to have an unworthy father, or mother, or country, or any similar tie. Now wicked men, when subject to any evil of this kind, observe it with a kind of satisfaction; and draw attention to it by their vituperations, and enlarge on the enormity — whether in their parents or their country—in order that, while they neglect their own duty towards them, men may not make such neglect a ground of accusation, or reproach. And thus their censure far exceeds what is merited; and, to unavoidable causes of dislike, they add causes of their own making. Whereas good men, on the contrary, dissemble in such cases, and compel themselves to speak even the language of praise; and, if ever at all enraged with their parents, or country, for wrong inflicted, they sober and tranquillise their feelings, and seek a reconciliation by forcing themselves into a condition to love and admire those who are thus connected with them. And so, I imagine, did Simonides frequently find it his duty to speak of a tyrant, or some similar character, in terms of admiration and panegyric —not willingly, remember, but by compulsion. This then explains what he says to Pittacus. If I blame you, Pittacus, it is not because I am fond of blaming; since I, for my part, am content with a man who is not evil or helpless

quite; who does but know the justice that saves a city, and is of sound mind. Such a man I will not censure; for censure I do not love: besides, infinite is the family of fools (thereby implying, that if a man were fond of blaming, he might take his fill by blaming these). Sure, all is fair wherewith foul is not mixed. And by this he does not mean the same as if he had said, Sure, all is white wherewith black is not mixed; for this would be absurd, in more ways than one: but what he does mean to say is, that he admits of a mean which he does not condemn. And I search not, he says, for an all-blameless man among us, who feed on the fruits of the wide-bosomed earth; when I find one, I will let you know. So that if on this depended praise, I should praise none; but I am content with one who holds the mean, and does no evil; since all I love and praise (here, as addressing Pittacus, he uses the dialect of Mytilene); since all I love and praise willingly (here, at the word willingly, we must make the pause in reading) who do nought vile; there are some, though, whom I praise and love against my will. Thee therefore, Pittacus, hadst thou spoken but moderate sooth and reason, I would never have blamed; 347
but now, as thy lie is utter, and on the greatest things, while thou fanciest thyself speaking truth, I cannot choose but give thee blame.

Such, Prodicus and Protagoras, I conclude to have been the object which Simonides had in view in the composition of this poem.

And a very fair exposition you have made of it too, Socrates, in my opinion, said Hippias. I however, gentlemen, he continued, possess a critique of my own on this piece—a very good one—which I am willing to propound to you, if you would like to hear it.

Thank you, Hippias, cried Alcibiades; another day, if you please. To-day it's only fair that Protagoras and Socrates should fulfil their mutual agreement; which binds Socrates to reply, if Protagoras has any further question to propose: but to ask questions himself, if Protagoras prefers to answer.

Yes, I said, I leave it to Protagoras to choose whichever is more agreeable to him. But, Protagoras, I added, if you have no objection, I should like to drop these criticisms on songs and poems, and should much prefer coming to a conclusion on the former subject of our inquiry, by investigating it in company with you. For, I must confess, I think that talking about poetry bears a close resemblance to the festive amusements of the vulgar and uneducated. For these people, being too ignorant to converse together over their cups through the medium of their own voices and words, keep up the prices of flute-players by hiring, for large sums, the foreign aid of their flutes, and entertaining each other through *their* voices. But in the banquets of gentlemen and scholars, you will see neither dancing-girls nor women that play on the flute or the lyre; but you will find the guests themselves

equal to the task of conversing, without these puerile toys, by their own voices; both speaking and listening in turn, with decency and order, even though they have drunk a great quantity of wine. And so too parties like the present, if indeed composed of such men as most of us profess to be, have no need to borrow the foreign voices even of poets, whom it is impossible to interrogate as to their meaning; but who are cited as authorities by combatants in their talk, while both sides assign a different sense to the citation, and persist in disputing a point, which they can never satisfactorily settle. No; wise men care nothing for such entertainment as this: but entertain each other with their own stores, by giving and 348
receiving mutually, in their own conversation, proofs of their capacity. And such is the example which it appears to me that you and I ought rather to imitate; let us throw the poets on one side, and, conducting the discourse by our own unaided efforts, bring at once truth and our own selves to the test. Should you therefore wish still to interrogate, I am ready to lend myself to you in reply: but if you prefer answering, do you lend me your aid in bringing to a conclusion that inquiry, of which we abandoned the discussion in the middle.

Notwithstanding these and similar remarks on my part, Protagoras continued to keep us in the dark as to the course he should prefer; upon which Alcibiades looked at Callias, and said, Callias, do you still think that Protagoras

acts fairly in refusing to let us know whether he will answer or not? For my part, I certainly do not think that he does. No, let him either continue the conversation, or tell us at once that he is unwilling to do so, in order that, his unwillingness being once clearly understood, we may either get Socrates to converse with some one else, or find another pair willing to engage in a discussion. Whereupon, Protagoras being piqued, as it appeared to me, by this remark of Alcibiades, and being pressed by Callias and nearly all the remainder of the party, was at length induced, though with great difficulty, to renew the conversation; which he did by requesting me to start my inquiries, as he was now ready to reply.

So I began. Pray do not imagine, Protagoras, that I have ever any other design in conversing with you, than a wish to examine thoroughly into difficulties which I cannot of myself unravel. I think that Homer was very right in saying, When two go together, one observes before the other. For so do all of us mortals acquire a greater facility for every deed, and word, and thought. But if haply a man has thought alone, he straightway goes up and down, and searches till he find some one else to whom he may communicate his thought, and in concert with whom he may verify it. And this is the reason why I have greater pleasure in conversing with you than with any other man in the world, as I am persuaded that none are so well capable of investigating all subjects

which are worth the good man's study, and in particular the subject of virtue. For to whom but you should I apply? when not only do you profess yourself a virtuous gentleman, just as is professed by many good people, who cannot impart their goodness to others; but when, beside being virtuous yourself, you are able to make others virtuous also; when, further, your confidence in yourself is so implicit, that, whereas it is the custom with other masters of your art to dissemble it with care, you, on the 349
other hand, have yourself publicly cried under the name of a sophist before all the Greeks, and advertise yourself a teacher of accomplishment and virtue; being moreover the first to conceive yourself entitled to receive a price for your instructions. Is it not then every man's duty to appeal to you for the investigation of these matters, to inquire into your opinions, and communicate his own? Most assuredly it is. And so on the present occasion I am anxious to renew from the beginning those questions, which I in the first instance proposed to you on these subjects, hoping that you will remind me of points which we decided, and join me in considering others. My inquiry, if I remember right, was this: Wisdom, discretion, courage, holiness, and justice, are these all but five names for one and the same thing; or is there attached to each of these names a distinct idea, and a distinct thing possessing a separate function of its own, whereby it is distinguished from all the rest? To this you

replied, that they were not names of one thing, but that each of these names was applied to a distinct thing, and that all these things were parts of virtue, not like the parts of gold, which resemble both one another, and the whole whereof they are parts, but like the parts of the face, which are dissimilar from the whole and from one another, each being possessed of a distinct function. If then you still adhere to your former opinion, tell me; but if you have altered it at all, mark the alteration clearly, as I hold you in no wise accountable for any difference of opinion you may choose to express. Nay, I should not be surprised if your previous answer was merely intended to try me.

Well, Socrates, he said, I tell you that all these qualities are parts of virtue, and that four of them bear a reasonably close resemblance to one another, but that courage is very different indeed from them all. And the following fact will prove my assertion. You will find many men distinguished for injustice, impiety, intemperance, and stupidity, who are yet eminently conspicuous for their courage.

Hold there a moment, I cried; your observation is worth examining. By the courageous, do you mean the daring?

Yes, he said, and those who are ready to plunge into dangers which most men are afraid to encounter.

Again, do you pronounce virtue to be a beautiful thing, and as being a beautiful thing do you come forward to teach it?

Nay, Socrates, as I'm a sane man, I pronounce it to be of all things most beautiful.

Is, however, one part of it beautiful and another ugly, or is it all beautiful?

All beautiful, I consider, and in the highest degree.

Do you know who they are that dive into wells daringly?

Of course I do, said he. Divers. 350

Is it because they know how to dive, or for some other reason?

Because they know how to dive.

And who are daring fighters on horseback, good riders or bad?

Good riders.

And who are daring as targeteers, those who understand the service or those who do not?

Those who do. And so in everything else, he added, if this is what you are driving at, the scientific are more daring than the unscientific, and the same person when he has acquired the science is more daring than he was before he acquired it.

Have you ever in your life, said I, met with persons who were unscientific in all these matters, and yet engaged in them all with daring?

Certainly I have, and with excessive daring.

Are these daring people also courageous?

If they were, he answered, courage would be far from being a beautiful thing; for these are mere madmen.

Pray how do you define the courageous? I asked. Did you not say they were the daring?

I did, and I say so now.

It would appear then, said I, that those who are daring in this way are not courageous, but mad; and from the former instances I adduced, that the wisest men are also most daring, and as being most daring are most courageous. So that by this reasoning, wisdom would be courage, would it not?

You do not rightly remember, Socrates, he answered, what I said in reply to your question. When asked by you whether the courageous were daring, I agreed they were; but whether the daring also were courageous, you did not ask me then. Had you done so, I should have replied, Not all. But that the courageous are not daring, and that I was wrong in admitting they were, you have nowhere proved. Instead of doing so, you take the trouble of showing, that those who possess science are more daring than they were themselves before they possessed it, and more daring than others who do not possess it, and thereby you conclude that courage and wisdom are identical. But, by pursuing this method of inquiry, you might equally well arrive at the conclusion, that bodily strength is wisdom. For if, in following out this course, you were in the first place, to ask me whether the strong were powerful, I should say, Yes; if you were to proceed to inquire whether scientific wrestlers were more powerful than unscientific wrestlers,

and more powerful than they were themselves before they had learnt the science of wrestling, I should again reply, Yes; and after I had made these admissions, you would be in a condition, by availing yourself of the same logic as before, to state that by my admission wisdom was bodily strength. But here again observe, I nowhere admit that the powerful are strong, though I do that the strong are powerful. For I do not consider strength and power to be the same; but the one, power, to arise from 351
science, yes, and from madness too, and passion; but strength from sound nature and good bodily nourishment. In like manner, I maintain that courage and daring are not the same. Courageous men are daring, but it is not all daring men that are courageous; for daring, like power, arises from scientific skill, and from passion too, and madness, but courage, from nature and good mental nurture.

Do you allow, Protagoras, said I, that some men live well, and others ill?

I do, he replied.

Do you think that a man would live well if he lived in vexation and pain?

No.

But if he lived in pleasure to the day of his death, you would consider him then, would you not, to have lived well?

I, should.

To live pleasantly then, it appears, is a good thing; to live unpleasantly, an evil thing.

Yes, if the pleasures a man lives in be but honest.

How, Protagoras, I exclaimed, do you maintain with the many, that some pleasant things are evil, and some painful things good? For myself, I say, as far as things are pleasant, are they not so far good, if they are to have no other results? And, on the other hand, are not painful things in the same way evil, in so far as they are painful?

I am not sure, Socrates, he replied, whether I ought to answer as unreservedly as you ask, that pleasant things are all good, and painful things all evil. No, I conceive that it would be safer for me, not only in reference to my present answer, but also to all the rest of my life, if I were to reply that there are some pleasant things which are not good, some painful things which are not evil, others again which are such, while there is a third class which are neither the one nor the other, neither evil nor good.

By pleasant things, I asked, do you not mean those with which pleasure is connected or which cause pleasure?

To be sure I do, he replied.

I ask then, whether they be not good, in so far as they are pleasant; meaning by this question to ask, whether pleasure itself be not a good thing.

Well, Socrates, he answered, I say to you, as you are always saying yourself, let us examine the matter, and if the question seem germane to our subject, and it appears that pleasure and good are the same, we will agree on the point; if not, we will then join issue.

Would you like, I asked, to take the lead in the examination yourself, or shall I?

You are the proper person to lead, he answered; for it was you who started the subject.

Perhaps then, said I, by some way like the
352 following, we shall arrive at a clear view of the question. Just as a person who was forming an estimate of a man's health or physical capacity in any particular, from a survey of his bodily form, would be sure to say to him, if he saw no more than his face and hands, Come, my good friend, strip, if you please, and show me your chest and your back, that I may inspect you more closely; so do I now crave some disclosure of the kind for our present investigation. Having observed, from what you have told me, the state of your mind with regard to pleasure and good, I still require to say, Come, friend Protagoras, uncover your mind further, and show me its state with regard to knowledge. On this point, also, do you think as the many do, or differently? *Their* opinion of knowledge is, that it is not a strong, nor a commanding, nor a governing thing; nor do they form their notions with reference to it, as though it were such; but conceive that, though knowledge is often to be found in a man, it is not his knowledge that governs him, but some other thing, at one time passion, at another pleasure, at another pain, sometimes love, and often fear; so that they plainly think of knowledge as of a poor slave, liable to be

dragged about at will by all those other things. Is this then your opinion also? or do you conceive knowledge to be a noble thing, well fitted to govern mankind; and that if a man does but know what is good and evil, he can never be so swayed by any other thing, as to do aught else than what his knowledge prescribes, and, in fine, that wisdom is well able to defend mankind?

I quite think as you say, Socrates, he answered. And besides, if for any man in the world, it were a shame for me, to deny that wisdom and knowledge are of all human things the mightiest.

Well and truly said, I rejoined. Are you aware though, that most men do not believe you and me in this matter, but say that many people, who know what is best, do not choose to practise it, though it is in their power to practise it, but practise other things? And never have I asked the reason of this conduct, but I have been told that such people act thus from being overpowered by pleasure or pain, or mastered by some one of those things which I just now mentioned.

I don't doubt it, Socrates, he replied. There are many other points on which men speak incorrectly.

Come then, said I, and join me in endeavouring to persuade these men, and teach them
353 what that state is, which they call being overpowered by pleasure, and which prevents people from doing, although they know, what is best.

For I should not wonder if on our saying to them, You speak incorrectly, my friends, you are deceived, they were to turn upon us with the question ; Protagoras and Socrates, if being overpowered by pleasure is not this, pray what is it ? what do you declare it to be ? tell us both of you.

What business is it of ours, Socrates, to examine into the opinion of the vulgar herd, who just say what comes first into their head ?

I think, I replied, that we shall find this inquiry help us somewhat in discovering the relation which courage bears to the other parts of virtue. If it is your intention then to abide by our late agreement which assigned the lead to me, let me beg you to follow me on the road which I expect will best conduct us to the light. But if you are unwilling to do so, I will drop this question, if such be your pleasure.

No, Socrates, said he ; you are right, finish as you have begun.

Again then, said I, if they were to ask us, What do you declare this to be, which we called being subject to pleasures ? I for my part should answer, Hearken, my friends, we will endeavour to tell you, Protagoras and I. Do you not allow that you experience this subjection in the following circumstances ? that often you are so swayed by eating and drinking and love, all pleasant things, that, though you know them to be evil, you still indulge in them ?

Yes, they would allow it, said Protagoras.

You and I then, Protagoras, will ask them again, In what point of view do you say that they are evil? Is it because they afford this pleasure at the moment, and because each of them is pleasant for the moment, or because they lay up for your future life diseases and poverty, and many other similar evils? Or, if they produced none of these after effects, but merely created pleasure, should you still pronounce them evil for making a man pleased under any circumstances and in any way whatsoever? Can we conceive, Protagoras, that they would return us any other answer, than that these things were evil, not for the mere fact of creating the momentary pleasure, but on account of the diseases and other results which follow in their train?

Such, I imagine, said Protagoras, would be the answer of the many.

And when they create diseases, do they create pain? and when they create poverty, do they create pain? They would assent to this, I think.

And so do I, said Protagoras.

Are you of opinion then, my friends, as I and Protagoras hold, that these things are evil for no other reason than because they terminate in pain, and deprive us of other pleasures? They would assent?

354 We both agreed that they would.

But suppose we were to reverse our question, and ask, When you speak, on the other hand, good people, of painful things being good, do

you not mean such things as gymnastic exercises, and military service, and the treatment of diseases by cautery and the knife, by dosing and starving? Is it not such things you call good, but painful? Yes, they would say.

Granted, said Protagoras.

Do you call these things good then for the reason, that they afford us at the moment the utmost pain and annoyance, or because their after results are the health and good condition of bodies, the safety, empire, and wealth of states? For the latter reason, would be their answer, I think.

Certainly it would, said he.

Are these things good on any other account than because they terminate in pleasures, and in deliverance from, and avoidance of, pains? Or can you tell me of some other end which you have in view when you call them good, than that of pleasure and pain? No, they would answer, in my opinion.

And in mine too, said he.

Do you pursue then pleasure as being a good thing, and shun pain as being an evil thing?

They do, replied Protagoras.

This then, pain, you esteem to be an evil, and pleasure to be a good; since you say that even the enjoyment of pleasure itself is evil, when it deprives you of greater pleasures than itself contains, or produces pains which exceed its own pleasures. For, if you call pleasure itself an evil for any other reason, or with any

other end in view than this, you may tell us, if you can ; but you cannot.

No, I do not think they can, said Protagoras.

And is it not exactly the same, on the other hand, with suffering pain ? Do you not call pain itself a good, when it rids you of greater pains than its own, or produces pleasures which exceed its pains ? Since, if you have any other end in view when you call pain itself a good, you may tell us, if you can ; but you cannot.

Quite true, Socrates, they cannot.

But if, my friends, you were on your side to interrogate me and ask, Why ever do you say so much on this question, and turn it in so many ways ? Bear with me, I should reply ; for, in the first place, it is no easy matter to prove what that is which you call being subject to pleasures"; and secondly, on this very question hinges all my proof. But even now, late as it is, you are at liberty to retract, if you can
355 say that good is anything else than pleasure ; evil, anything else than pain ; if you can tell me that you are not content to live out your life pleasantly in freedom from pain. But if you are so content, and cannot tell me of anything being good or evil, which does not terminate in these, hearken to what follows. I maintain that, if this be the case, your words become ridiculous, when you say, that often a man who knows evil to be evil, practises it nevertheless, when he is not obliged to prac-

tise it, from being led and carried out of himself by pleasures; and when, on the other hand, you say, that the man, who knows what is good, does not choose to practise it, on account of the immediate pleasures by which he is overmastered.

Now the absurdity of these statements will be clearly seen, if we abstain from using the many names of pleasant and painful, and good and evil; but agree, since the things have been found to be only two, to call them only by two names; first, by those of good and evil, and then by those of pleasant and painful. This being established, let us say, that a man, knowing evil to be evil, nevertheless does it. If any one ask us, Why? We shall answer, Because he is overpowered. By what? will be the next question. But we are no longer at liberty to say, By pleasure; for it has received another name, and instead of pleasure, is now called good. Let us answer him then and say, Because he is overpowered. By what? he will repeat. By good, we must reply. Now should our friend be disposed to raillery, he will laugh at us, and say, Ridiculous conduct this you speak of, when a man does evil knowing it to be evil, with no obligation to do it, because he is overpowered by good. Is it by a good, he will ask, which is worthy or not worthy in your opinion to overcome the evil? To this, of course, we shall reply, Not worthy; for otherwise the man whom we say is subject to pleasure would not be in fault. And

in what respect, he will probably continue, are good things unworthy to overcome evil, or evil to overcome good? is it in any other than in that of magnitude or quantity? We shall not be able to mention any other than this. It is evident then, he will conclude, that by this case of being overpowered, you mean, choosing greater evil instead of less good. So far then on this track. Now let us change our names, and again applying the terms pleasant and painful to these same things, let us say that a man does things, which we before called evil and now call painful, knowing them to be painful, being overpowered by pleasant things, which are of course unworthy to obtain the
356 mastery. And what other measure is there of pleasure in comparison with pain, than that of excess and defect? that is to say, of one being greater or smaller than the other, more or less, stronger or weaker? For if it be said, But, Socrates, there is a great difference between that which is pleasant at the moment, and that which is ultimately pleasant or painful; Does it lie, I should ask, in anything else than in pleasure and in pain? In nothing else, I am sure. No, like a man expert at weighing, put together all the pleasures, and put together all the pains, then set both their nearness and remoteness in the scales, and tell me which are the heavier. If you weigh pleasures against pleasures, the greater and the greater number are always to be chosen; if pains against pains, the smaller and the smaller number; if plea-

sures against pains, then, if the pains be exceeded by the pleasures, whether near by remote, or remote by near, the line of conduct is to be pursued in which this excess is contained; but if the pleasures be exceeded by the pains, then it is not to be pursued. Good people, I should ask, can these matters be settled in any other way? I am sure that they could tell me of no other.

Protagoras did not think they could either.

Seeing, then, that this is the case, answer me the following question. Do the same objects appear to your sight to be greater in size when near, and smaller in size when remote? or do they not?

They do, would be their answer.

And is it not the same with the thickness and number of objects? And do not equal sounds appear louder when near, fainter at a distance?

Yes, they would say.

If then our wellbeing had depended upon this, upon our making and choosing great lengths, and our avoiding and not making small ones, what would, to all appearance, have been the safeguard of our life? Would it be the art of mensuration, or the force of appearances? Or would this latter have led us astray, and caused us to be ever choosing and ever rejecting the same things; and ever repenting, in our practice and choice of lengths, both great and small? while the art of mensuration would bring to naught this phantom-show, and, pointing out to us the truth, would

anchor our soul thereon, and bid it rest, and assure us our life's safety. Would they allow, think you, that, in this case, the art of mensuration would save us, or some other art?

None other, said he.

Again, if the security of our life depended on the choice of odd and even numbers, on choosing, at the proper time, the larger, and at the proper time the smaller, by comparison both between themselves and one another, whether they might be far or whether they might be near; what would, in this case, be
357 our life's safeguard? Would it not be a science? and would it not, further, be one of measurement, since it relates to excess and defect? and since it has numbers for its object, could it be any other than arithmetic? To this would our friends assent, or would they not?

Protagoras agreed with me that they would.

Come then, my friends, I proceeded, since the security of our life has been found to depend on our choice of pleasure and pain being correct, with reference at once to quantity and degree and distance, does not our security appear to you, in the first instance, to consist in measurement, since it has to consider excess and defect and respective equality?

Yes, it must.

And if in measurement, it must, of necessity, be an art and a science.

Assuredly, they will say.

What art, what science this is, we will in-

quire some other time. That it is a science, is quite sufficient for the explanation which Protagoras and I have to give you of the question that you asked us. You proposed it, if you remember, at the time when Protagoras and I were agreeing that nothing was so powerful as scientific knowledge ; and that knowledge was ever dominant, wherever it existed, over both pleasure and everything else. But you, on the other hand, said that pleasure was often dominant, even over the man that was possessed of knowledge; and when. we refused to agree with you, you proceeded to ask: Socrates and Protagoras, you said, if being vanquished by pleasure is not this, pray what is it ? what do you declare it to be ? Tell us. If, then, at that moment we had answered you, that it was ignorance, you would have laughed at us ; but now, if you laugh at us, you will laugh at yourselves as well. For you have yourselves agreed, that whoever commits error in the choice of pleasure and pain—that is, of good and evil—commits it through defect of knowledge ; and not only of knowledge, but, as you further agreed, a knowledge of measurement. Now all action, that errs for want of knowledge, is committed, you must yourselves know, through ignorance. Being vanquished therefore by pleasure is ignorance, of all ignorance the greatest. Now of this Protagoras here professes himself a physician ; and so do Prodicus and Hippias. But you, because you believe it to be something else than ignorance, neither go

yourselves, nor send your children, to these sophists to be instructed in this matter, as though you imagined it could not be taught; but, by being chary of your gold, and by refusing to bestow it upon these men, succeed badly in your transactions, both public and private.
358 Such would be the answer we would render to the crowd. But you, Hippias and Prodicus, I ask you, in concert with Protagoras, wishing you to join in our conversation, do you judge that what I say is true or false?

They all agreed that nothing was more true.

You admit then, said I, that the pleasant is good, and the painful evil. But I would enter a protest against our friend Prodicus's verbal distinctions. Yes, my very excellent Prodicus, whether you call it pleasant, or agreeable, or enjoyable; whatever be the name, from whatever quarter derived, which you may be pleased to give it, restrict yourself to that answer which I wish to hear.

Prodicus laughed, and said he quite agreed with me, and so did all the rest.

But what do you say to the following, I continued? All actions which tend to this, to living, that is, pleasantly and without pain, are they not honourable, and, being honourable, are they not both good and useful?

They assented.

If then, I added, the pleasant is good, no man who either knows or believes that other things are better than that which he is doing, if they are such things as he can do, proceeds

to do the less good, when he might do the better. Neither is subjection to self aught else than ignorance; mastery over self aught else than wisdom.

They all assented.

But tell me. What is ignorance, according to you? is it not having a false opinion and being deceived on matters of great moment?

Here again there was no dissentient voice.

Is it not true then, said I, that no one enters willingly into evil, or into that which he considers evil; that it is not, in fact, in the nature of man to engage with deliberate purpose in what he believes to be evil instead of in good; that no man, when compelled to choose one of two evils, will choose the greater, when he might choose the less?

All these questions met with universal assent.

To the point then, I said. Do you say that there is such a thing as terror or fear? Do you understand by it the same as I do? To you, Prodicus, I address myself. I understand by it a certain expectation of evil, whether you call it terror or fear.

Protagoras and Hippias were of opinion that this was the meaning both of terror and fear; Prodicus thought it was of terror, but not of fear.

No matter for that, Prodicus, said I. But this does matter. If our former conclusions are true, will any man in the world deliberately enter into what he fears, when he might enter into that which he does not fear? or is it

impossible by our previous admissions? for we have admitted that, what he fears he believes to be evil, and what he believes to be evil, he never engages in or chooses willingly.

359 All agreed to this also.

Prodicus and Hippias, said I, now that we have established these points, let us call on Protagoras to defend the answer which he gave us at first—no, not quite at first. At first he said, that of the parts of virtue, which were five in number, there was not one like any other, and that each had a distinct function of its own. This is not the statement I mean, but a later one; for afterwards he said, that four of these parts bore a reasonably close resemblance to one another, but that the fifth was widely different from the rest, this fifth being courage. And he told me that I should be convinced of this by the following fact. Socrates, said he, you will find men of the greatest impiety, and injustice, and intemperance, and ignorance most distinguished for courage. This will show you that courage differs greatly from the other parts of virtue. And astonished as I was by this answer at the moment, it has astonished me still more since my late investigations with you. However, at the time I asked him whether by the courageous he meant the daring. Yes, said he, and men eager for encounter. Do you remember giving this answer, Protagoras?

I do, he replied.

Come then, said I, tell us what it is which,

according to you, the courageous are eager to encounter? Is it the same as cowards?

No.

Is it different then?

Yes.

Do cowards engage in what is safe, brave men in what is formidable?

So it is generally said, Socrates.

You are right, said I; but this is not my question. According to you, what is it which brave men are eager to encounter? that which is formidable, believing it to be formidable, or that which is not formidable?

Why the former, Socrates, your late arguments have shown to be impossible.

Again you are right, said I. If our reasoning was correct, no man engages in what he believes to be formidable, since we found that want of self-command was want of knowledge.

Granted, said he.

But on the other hand, all men engage in that which inspires them with confidence, whether they be cowardly or courageous, and in this point of view, at any rate, both the one and the other encounter the same things.

But I can assure you, Socrates, he said, that no things can be more opposed to each other than the things which cowards and brave men encounter. To take the first instance that comes, the latter are willing to encounter war, the former are not.

When it is honourable, I asked, to engage in it, or disgraceful?

When it is honourable, he answered.

And if it is honourable, it is also good by our former admission; for we admitted that all honourable actions were good.

We did, said he; and I am always of this opinion.

And very properly too, I rejoined. But
360 which class do you say are not willing to encounter war, when it is honourable and good?

Cowards, he replied.

And if it be honourable and good, it is also pleasant?

Certainly, according to our premises.

Do cowards knowingly refuse to engage in what is honourable, and pleasant, and good?

No; for if we allow this, we shall overturn all our former admissions.

And the courageous man? does not he engage in what is honourable, and pleasant, and good?

I must allow he does.

In a word then, the courageous men fear no base fears, when they do fear, nor are they inspired with base confidences. Is not this true?

It is, he answered.

And if not base, are they not honourable?

Granted.

And if honourable, good?

Yes.

And are not the cowardly, the foolhardy, and the phrensied, possessed on the contrary with

base fears, and inspired with base confidences?

They are.

And when they dare what is base and evil, do they dare it in consequence of anything else than ignorance and want of understanding?

No, he replied.

Again, said I. That which makes cowards cowardly, do you call it cowardice or courage?

Cowardice, of course.

And have they not been found to be cowardly in consequence of their ignorance of that which is formidable?

Certainly they have.

It is this ignorance then, it appears, which makes them cowardly?

Granted.

And that which makes them cowardly you have allowed to be cowardice?

I have, he said.

Ignorance then of that which is formidable and not formidable proves to be cowardice.

He nodded his head.

Again, said I, is courage opposite to cowardice?

Yes.

Is knowledge of that which is formidable and not formidable opposite to ignorance of the same?

Here again he nodded his head.

And ignorance of this is cowardice?

Though with a very bad grace, he here nodded again.

Knowledge then of that which is formidable

and not formidable is courage, since it is opposite to ignorance of the same.

At this he would neither make a sign nor utter a word.

So I said: How is it, Protagoras, that you will not say either yes or no to my question?

Finish by yourself, said he.

Only one more question will I ask you. Do you still think, as you did formerly, that there are some men very ignorant, and at the same time very courageous?

You seem to stickle, Socrates, for the answer coming from me. Well, I'll indulge you so far, and say that by our previous admissions this appears to me to be impossible.

I can assure you, said I, that I have no other motive in proposing all these questions than a wish to observe the relations of virtuous things, and the nature of virtue itself. For
361 certain am I, that, if this point be once discovered, we shall clearly discern that other, on which both you and I launched out into a long harangue, I in maintaining that virtue could not be taught, and you in maintaining that it could. And I can fancy the upshot of our conversation attacking and deriding us like a human being, and that, if it got a voice, it would say, You are strange persons, both of you, Socrates and Protagoras. You, Socrates, who formerly maintained that virtue could not be taught, are now bent on contradicting yourself, by endeavouring to prove that all things are knowledge, both justice, and discretion, and

courage; a course of argument which leads most clearly to the result that virtue is a thing which can be taught. For if virtue were something different from knowledge, as Protagoras has been attempting to maintain, it evidently would not be susceptible of being taught; but now, if it be found to be all knowledge, as you, Socrates, are insisting, it will be strange indeed if it cannot be taught. Protagoras, on the other hand, who started with asserting that he could teach it, seems now bent on proving, in contradiction to that assertion, that it is almost anything rather than knowledge, and consequently the last thing in the world to be taught. I therefore, Protagoras, on observing how terrible is the confusion in which all these matters are thrown together, am all-desirous of bringing them to the light, and should be glad to follow up our late investigation by inquiring into the nature of virtue, and then reconsidering whether or no it is capable of being taught, lest haply the Epimetheus of your story trip us up treacherously in our examination, just as in the distribution of functions he neglected us carelessly, according to your account. The forethought of your Prometheus pleased me far more than his brother's afterthought; and it is because I take Prometheus for my counsellor, and look forward with his forethought over all my future life, that I busy myself with all these studies, and should be delighted, as I said before, to join you, if you have no objection, in fathoming them to the bottom.

To this Protagoras replied, I for my part, Socrates, applaud your zeal, and your skill in the evolution of arguments. For I consider that in no point of view am I a bad man, and that I am the last person in the world to be jealous. Thus often ere now have I said of you, that among all whom I am in the habit of meeting, I admire you the most, and among those of your own age by far the most; and I add, that I should not be surprised if you win yourself a place among our distinguished sages. And with regard to the present discussion, we will continue it on some future occasion, when agreeable to you, but to-day it is high time for me to betake myself to other business.

362 So be it, said I, since such is your pleasure. For I too ought long ago to have departed on the errand I mentioned; only I stayed to oblige the beautiful Callias.

Our conversation thus concluded, we left the house.

THE END

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